

**Window
on
Jordan**

Tuck into your favorite dishes at Hashem!

By a Star Staff Writer

IT'S THE only place where you can find the poor and the rich sitting on one table and ordering the same kind of food—a plate of 'fool' (beans) and another of 'hummous' which is made of chick-peas.

To add a little extra flavor, there are additional condiments on the table. These include the basic items like pita bread, onions, hot chillies (if you are lucky), and a small jug of olive oil.

You can find all this at 'Hashem', a traditional Arabic restaurant in the center of Amman. "Back in 1956, a plate of 'fool' would cost 3 to 4 piasters."

said Sameeh Hashem Al Tork, one of the sons of the man who established the restaurant. The same plate now costs 27.5 piasters (275 Fils).

This restaurant is one of the primary features of the capital, and has been an eye witness to the many events that occurred in the region. "I remember once during the September troubles in the early 1970s. We woke up to find a number of dead bodies outside our front door—one of them was badly wounded, but we managed to save him," said Al Tork.

Although situated in a very narrow alley, Hashem works around the clock. It even sends out

deliveries. All sorts of people come to the restaurant. "We receive between 800-900 customers a day," and the noise these customers generated made it difficult to hear Mr Al Tork sometimes. As soon as one table emptied, it was quickly re-occupied.

Hashem has become a famous landmark throughout the years, especially among tourists, who delight in tasting traditional Arab food at non-tourist prices.

"Many of the tourists who come to Jordan, read

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The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

Le Jourdain
Supplément en français du Star

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AMMAN, 1-7 OCTOBER 1998, VOLUME 9, NUMBER 17, 350 FILS

اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Peace process increases discontent

Ibtisam Awadat

Star Staff Writer

A SUMMIT was held in Washington this week, between the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and the US President Bill Clinton. A statement from President Clinton after the conclusion of the meetings, indicated that nothing had been achieved, but that a date for another meeting was scheduled for the 15 October.

"I don't consider the summit a failure, but neither is it a big success," said Dr As'ad Abdel Rahman, member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

"The achievement was in forcing Israel to comply with

the commitments made during earlier negotiations, including Israeli withdrawal from 13 percent of the West Bank," he said. Arafat announced his approval of this withdrawal last Tuesday, despite the designation of three percent of this area as a nature reserve.

The second success for the Palestinian negotiating team was the failure of the Israeli prime minister to admit to an Israeli-Zionist terrorist threat to Palestine.

"We insisted that any relationship should be equal, and based on reciprocity, and that before they call on Palestinians to combat terrorism, they had to confess that there was an Israeli and Zionist terrorist threat to Pal-



Dr As'ad Abdel Rahman

estine," continued Dr Abdel Rahman, who is in charge of the refugee file at the Pales-

tinian National Authority.

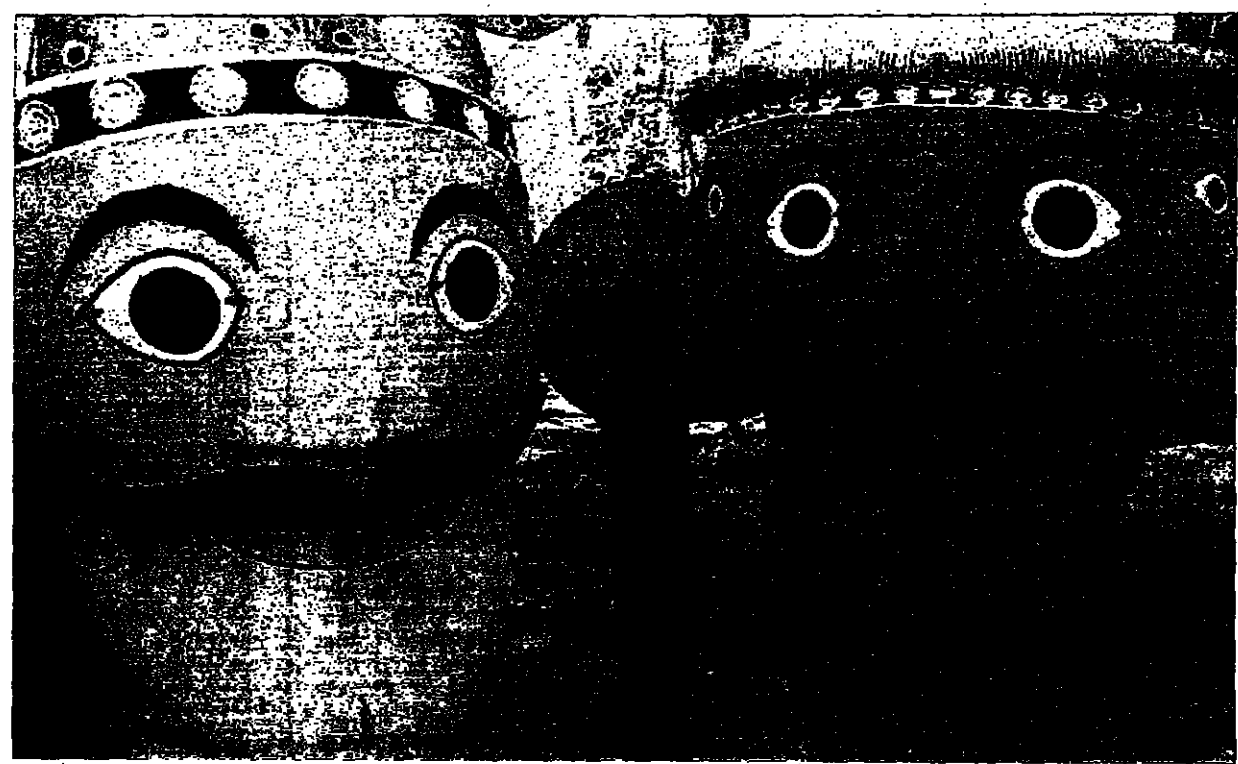
"We do not have much confidence in Netanyahu's government either, as we feel that their intentions are not genuine, and that they are against peace in general, and the Oslo Accord in particular," Abdel Rahman explained.

Many support Arafat in his stand to force Israel to comply with all the previous accords and agreements. "I hope that we will accomplish all the conditions outlined in the interim period, like the release of the prisoners, securing a path for future negotiations, the establishment of the Gaza airport, as well as the implementation of all the American initiatives," Dr Abdel Rahman told *The Star*.

Assuming that all this has been achieved, the Palestinians will then be ready to enter into the negotiations set out in the third stage of the Oslo Accords, which is to reach an agreement on a comprehensive, accurate, and final peace.

All this is going on amidst growing resentment from Palestinians and Israeli Arabs for peace process, which they consider to be more of a burden than a help to realizing their aspirations. The latest riots in Umm Al Fahm and in Nazareth testify to this mood.

"Whilst we meet around the negotiating table, our people are fighting real battles on the ground," Abdel Rahman added. Jordanians and Palestinians are frustrated at the Israeli obstinacy, and the continued one-sided support from the Americans. "During our meetings with American officials, it was obvious that they were not prepared to put any pressure on Israel," said Dr Labib Qamhawi, a political analyst, "and this leaves the Palestinians with only one alternative, and that is to declare the peace process dead. Their is no reciprocity in the negotiations at the moment, as the only party giving up rights are the Palestinians," said Qam-



An artist puts finishing touches to effigies of demon-king Ravana on the eve of the Hindu festival of Dussehra in New Delhi September 30. Dussehra, which falls on 1 October, marks the triumph of Hindu god-king Ram over the demon-king Ravana, whose effigy will be burnt to signify the triumph of good over evil.

REUTERS

Vaccines cause a state of chaos among schools

By Ilham Sadeq

Star Staff Writer

DESPITE ASSURANCES from the Ministry of Health, the number of school children reacting to the recent tetanus and typhoid vaccinations in schools around Amman, Zarqa and Koura has escalated. Dr Nael Al Ajlani, the Minister of Health, visited the pupils who were taken to hospital, and set up an investigation committee to get to the root of the problem. The results will be made available after a week.

Some sources doubt whether the Ministry of Health's laboratories have the facilities and expertise to validate the suspect vaccines. This only increases tension among Jordanian families, who have become skeptical about all vaccinations. Some even have told their children not to take the injections.

In a precautionary measure, the Ministry of Health is stopping the vaccination process until the results of the investigations are known. At the start of each school year,



Concerned mothers rushing to school after hearing the news of the vaccination crisis.

the Ministry of Education launches an inoculation campaign in all public schools. This time, however, things did not go as planned.

After taking the tetanus and typhoid injections a few days ago, around 160 students developed symptoms of dizziness. Some even fainted directly after receiving

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Low expectations for Middle East Summit

By Rebecca Trounson

JERUSALEM—Now that Israeli and Palestinian leaders have agreed to a high-stakes Washington summit next month, the question arises: What chance is there that the talks will restore significant momentum and vitality to a peace process that has been paralyzed for nearly 19 months?

The answer appears to be: not much.

Given President Clinton's weakened status, the profound distrust between Yasser Arafat and Benjamin Netanyahu, and the many thorny issues confronting them, observers were skeptical that any real progress is on the horizon.

"There's nothing that's happened in the last year—or the last couple days—that indicates anything like that is going to happen," said Gerald

Steinberg, a political studies professor at Bar Ilan University in Tel Aviv. "The odds are going to be very, very low."

Nonetheless, the mid-October summit proposed by Clinton could, at long last, produce a deal for Israel to withdraw its troops from another chunk of the occupied West Bank in exchange for tougher Palestinian actions to fight terrorism. That alone is nothing to scoff at.

"Any agreement that comes out at this point will be a shadow of what it could or should have been, if it was signed a year ago," said Hebrew University political scientist Yaron Ezrahi. "But such an agreement is far better than none."

Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, and Arafat, the Palestinian Authority president, already have accepted part of a US initiative for the withdrawal. After months of US-brokered negotiations, they now agree that Israel will cede an additional 13 percent of the West Bank to the Palestinians in the redeployment, although 3 percent of that area will be designated a "nature reserve" with special restrictions.

However, the partial agreement was not announced at joint news conference Monday at the White House, evidently because neither man trusts that the other will actually follow through. Instead, the pair stood, unsmiling, on either side of Clinton and did not acknowledge each other or shake hands during their brief appearance.

On Tuesday, Arafat emerged from a separate meeting with Clinton to confirm that the Palestinians accept the idea of the nature reserve as long as it is designated part of an existing category of West Bank land that Israelis and Palestinians call "Area B," in which Palestinians have control over civil matters and Israelis have responsibility for security.

After months of impasse, both Arafat and Netanyahu have reasons to try to strike a deal now, if only to earn the



gratitude of the troubled US leader at a critical juncture in his presidency. A Middle East accord would give Clinton a high-profile foreign policy success even as his domestic political troubles mount.

"They've got the opportunity to endow themselves to the president of the United States forever and ever by going for this," a US official said last week. "There's got to be some interest in that."

Both leaders have other reasons for moving forward. For Arafat, it's the opportunity to add more land, albeit less than he had hoped, to the parameters of the Palestinian state he plans to declare in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as early as next May. For Netanyahu, it's the chance to get a more detailed, concrete plan, from the Palestinians on fighting anti-Israeli extremists than has existed before, allowing him to tell Israelis that he has kept a campaign promise to achieve

"peace with security."

For months, Netanyahu has insisted that the Palestinians take more concerted action against Islamic militant groups that have launched numerous deadly attacks against Israel from areas under Palestinian control. His concerns were underscored Tuesday when an explosion in a car near the West Bank city of Ramallah left one man dead and two others wounded. Palestinian police said the three were members of the militant Islamic group Hamas and may have been for an attack in Israel during the Yom Kippur holiday, the Jewish day of atonement, which began at sundown on Tuesday.

But the two leaders must also weigh the domestic political risks they would face in allowing progress in peace negotiations to be vehemently opposed by extremists and oth-

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Iraq reportedly working towards A-Bomb

By Barton Gellman

WASHINGTON—United Nations arms inspectors reported twice to the United States, in 1996 and 1997, that they had credible intelligence indicating that Iraq built and has maintained three or four "implosion devices" that lack only cores of enriched uranium to make 20-kiloton nuclear weapons, according to US government and UN sources.

American intelligence assessments, US officials said Tuesday, concur on the credibility of the reports but have not fully corroborated them. If Iraq has in fact managed to manufacture such devices—in essence, the shells of nuclear weapons without the atomic cores—it is substantially closer than previously known to joining the world's nuclear powers, according to the LA Times-Washington Post News Service.

There is no known evidence that the Baghdad government has acquired plutonium or highly enriched uranium, without which its weapons design cannot be completed. Many experts, including those

in the US government, regard the nuclear supply problem as a higher hurdle for aspiring weapons builders than fabrication of the shell of precision-shaped conventional charges that would be used to detonate the fissile material.

But the existence of weapons shells would be a milestone for Iraq and raise new questions about the policies and public assessments of the Clinton administration and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is responsible for investigating any evidence that Iraq is violating a ban on its nuclear weapons program. Since 1996, the Vienna-based panel has reported regularly to the UN Security Council that it has found "no indication of prohibited equipment, materials or activities."

A cache of undiscovered implosion devices would also illuminate the stakes involved in Iraq's refusal since August 3 to permit UN inspectors to mount new searches for banned materials. US officials acknowledged that there is little prospect of discovering and destroying such devices without the active pro-

gram of surprise inspections that has now been terminated.

Reports of the implosion devices were first aired publicly by Scott Ritter, a former Marine who has been critical of US government policy since he resigned from the UN Special Commission, or UNSCOM, in August. After Ritter testified about the devices to Senate and House committees on September 4 and September 15, senior US policymakers said the government had never received such a report from UNSCOM and did not regard the claims as credible.

Both those assertions are contradicted by evidence emerging this week. In interviews and in documents made available to The Washington Post, US government and United Nations sources confirmed that Ritter passed the intelligence orally to the Central Intelligence Agency's Nonproliferation Center in 1996 and in writing in May 1997 to an interagency group supporting the weapons inspectors. Some senior administration officials disputed Tuesday that there is any reason to

regard the UNSCOM intelligence as credible. But those US officials most responsible for assessing the reports said in interviews that they believed the findings are plausible. "It is credible that they (Iraqi designers) have all the parts to put together," one of the officials said Tuesday. "Do I think there might be parts out there that could provide the basis to put together several weapons? Yeah."

Ritter's original information, according to accounts he gave the US government, was compiled from three Iraqi defectors. Ritter later told the IAEA, according to other sources, that the defector information came to UNSCOM by way of a "northern European" country.

It was not clear from the defectors, sources said, whether the devices would meet Iraq's design goal of fitting inside the 88-centimeter (roughly 34-inch) warhead of a Scud missile. At 20 kilotons, the expected yield of the devices would be greater than that of the first atomic bomb, a 13-kiloton device dropped by the United States on Hiroshima in 1945.

هكذا من الأخبار

King receives top Kuwaiti envoy and thanks Saudi Prince

WASHINGTON (Petra)—His Majesty King Hussein received at his residence in Washington the Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, who inquired about His Majesty's health and wished him a speedy recovery.

The Kuwaiti Minister delivered to His Majesty, greetings of the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jabir Al Ahmad Al Sabah. The King and Sheikh Sabah discussed brotherly ties between Jordan and Kuwait.

The meeting was attended by Jordan's Ambassador to the US, Dr Marwan Muasher and the Kuwaiti Ambassador in Washington, Sheikh Mohammad Al Sabah.

Meanwhile, the King sent a cable to Saudi Crown Prince, Abdullah Ibn Abdul Aziz Al Saud, expressing his deep thanks and appreciation to Prince Abdullah and members of the Royal Saudi family for the true and noble feelings of brotherhood, expressed during their visit to the King.

"I will never forget those true and noble feelings," the King said in his message. His Majesty expressed his deep joy over the invitation extended to him by Prince Abdullah to visit Saudi Arabia and perform Umrah (the smaller pilgrimage), after his recovery and safe return home.

The King said he appreciated the noble gesture of the members of the Royal Saudi family, who accompanied Prince Abdullah.

Tuck into your favorite dishes

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about us in their travel books about the Kingdom. I myself have no idea when and where these were published," Mr Al Turk continued.

He added, "Jordanian students who study abroad know about us. One old man started to eat here after his son—who studies in Algeria—told him about Hashem." The student misses this kind of food, and recommended that his father to eat.

Hashem evokes memory. On the walls, there are pictures of some of the well known personalities who have visited. One is of former Amman Mayor, Dr Mamdouh Abbadi. Others in-

clude the famous Iraqi singer Kishan Al Saher, and the Lebanese singer/composer Mitham Barakat, who frequently visits Hashem whenever he is in Amman.

Many articles have been written by journalists about Hashem over the years. Some have come to regard it as their meeting place.

Due to its popularity, it has just opened another branch on Makka Street. "It has become very difficult to receive our customers now, especially as we have some regulars who have been coming here since the 1940s and 1970s," commented Al Turk. The times they are changing.

"I remember how we were the only restaurant on this spot, near the Philadelphia Hotel. After a heavy meal, the tourist would go back to the hotel for a rest." But now access to the restaurant, especially by car, has become very difficult.

However, the situation is different in Makka Street. "I received the Minister of Finance and the Director of Jordan Television a couple of days ago," Al Turk continued, "and we have more young women eating here, as it's somewhat uncomfortable for them to eat in our central restaurant downtown, where the clientele is predominantly male."

Vaccines cause a state of chaos among schools

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tions, whilst others complained of low blood pressure. Similar symptoms were observed on other students the next day. The total number of students who were vaccinated was 160,000.

"It is clear that there is something wrong. It could be a labeling error, showing a different dose percentage, or it could be a mistake in the storage of the vaccines," former Health Minister, Dr Abdel Raheem Malhas, told The Star.

If it is revealed that the problem was a storage or labeling error, then Dr Malhas blames the health authorities for not enfor-

cing strict supervision. The vaccines were due to expire in November, but as already mentioned, the correct storage and labeling of the drugs is essential. Dr Mohammad Al Khateeb, director of the Zarka Hospital told The Star that, "Among the 150 children that were admitted to hospital because of the vaccinations, only one remains under observation." Dr Al Khateeb avails the results of the investigations with interest.

Sharing this view is the Secretary-General of the Jordan Medical Association, who shares the same name. Dr Mohammad Al Khateeb. "I don't think that the problem was caused by the poor adminis-

tration," he said. "The problem was due to the poor administration of the vaccines. The correct storage and labeling of the drugs is essential. Dr Mohammad Al Khateeb, director of the Zarka Hospital told The Star that, "Among the 150 children that were admitted to hospital because of the vaccinations, only one remains under observation." Dr Al Khateeb avails the results of the investigations with interest.

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Child song festival gets standing ovation



Majda Al Roumi, with her daughter



HRH Princess Alia Al Faisal opening the festival

AMMAN (Star)—Deputizing for Her Majesty Queen Noor, HRH Princess Alia Al Faisal inaugurated the Fourth Jordanian Children's Song Festival. Both Minister of Culture, Talaat Sana' Al Hassan, and Minister of Information, Nasser Joudeh, attended the opening ceremony, which took place at the Royal Cultural Center this week. Well-known Lebanese singer Majda Al Roumi also attended as a guest of honor.

Mr Sana' Al Hassan said that his Ministry is giving this year's festival top priority. Over 100 children from all

over the region participated in a ceremony that represented their dreams for Arab unity.

Speaking on the eve of the festival, Al Roumi said, "We should all be aware of the needs of the child, to let them express their talents, and allow them to express their ideas freely."

As children are the ones who suffer the most from wars and political differences, Al Roumi paid tribute to those youngsters in occupied Palestine and Southern Lebanon, who are tirelessly standing up for their rights.

Al Roumi would not be drawn when questioned about producing songs especially for children. She said that, "This type of song needs specialization, and they have to be of a certain standard to convey the right message to Arab children."

During the opening ceremony, many children performed an operette about Algeria, where human massacres have become an everyday reality. "It's unbelievable; the people there must share our concern for finding an end to the crisis."

She urged every one interested in this kind of art, to produce more songs for children, so as to shed light on their difficulties in Palestine, Lebanon, and other Arab countries.

Princess Alia opened a cartoon art show for children, which was organized by the Arab Child's Development Council. Other activities include seminars and exhibitions by academics and experts from Jordan and abroad. The festival continues until November 1.

There was a good attendance at this year's festival

For the Record

Prince Hassan receives Saudi Qaddafi

AMMAN (Petra)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received Al Saïd Muammar Qaddafi—the son of Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi—the head of the Football Federation in Libya. Qaddafi conveyed the greetings of President Muammar Qaddafi to His Majesty King Hussein and to Prince Hassan, expressing wishes for a speedy recovery and safe return of the King. Prince Hassan asked Qaddafi to convey his greetings to President Muammar Qaddafi, stressing Jordan's keenness to develop relations with Libya. Qaddafi expressed Libyan keenness to develop cooperation with Jordan, particularly in the economic and health fields.

Beltaji meets French Ambassador

AMMAN (Petra)—Minister of Tourism, Adel Beltaji, met French Ambassador to Amman, Bernard Enrie, on Monday for talks on tourist cooperation between the two countries. The two sides discussed France's aid to Jordan to help set up a museum in Jerash, establishing nature reserves and classifying tourist hotels according to latest international criteria. The talks focused on the current preparations for the Tourism Ministry's campaign in France, designed to promote Jordan's tourism through a comprehensive program. Beltaji visited France on 8 October, for talks with French officials on tourist cooperation between the two countries.

Jordan and Europe to strengthen ties

AMMAN (Petra)—Jordan took part in meetings of the Conference of Euro-Mediterranean countries, which was held in the Netherlands during 22-25 September, with a view to reaching a formula for programs of cooperation between countries of the European Union and the Mediterranean. Assistant Secretary General of the Ministry of Social Development, Omar Hussein, who represented Jordan in the conference said, "The meetings discussed a working plan on social work strategies, and a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Social Development and the Dutch Ministry of Health and Health Care was approved recently." The meeting also touched upon means of enhancing cooperation between Jordan and the Netherlands in family and child related issues.

Crown Prince holds reception

Amman (Petra)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received at the Royal Court on Tuesday the participants of the Kings Way International Bike Race, which runs from Kerak to the south of Jordan. The race, which is held in Jordan for the first time, is organized by the French Nature Development Institution in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and aims to promote tourism in the Southern part of Jordan. In all, there are 30 participants from France, Belgium and Jordan. His Royal Highness congratulated the participants on their achievements, expressing his happiness for holding the race in Jordan. The meeting was attended by the Ministers of Youth and Culture, and Information, as well as the Tourism and Antiquities Secretary General and the French Ambassador to Jordan.

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Peace process increases discontent

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hawi, who urged all the Arab countries to declare the peace process dead.

This declaration is the only way we can get our message across, and it will give us then the right to practice alternative methods of ending Israeli occupation," Qumhawi continued. "Our struggle cannot then be classified as 'terrorism,' as it will be a struggle by an occupied country, seeking its independence," he added.

"There is now a race against time, since the Oslo Accords stated that final negotiations were to be completed by May 1999," said Dr Thiyab Makhadmeh, professor of Political Science at the University of Jordan, "and that by this date, the dream of

a Palestinian state has to be fulfilled."

Some political analysts are saying that there is no mention in the Oslo Accords for the establishment of a Palestinian state. In response to this, Makhadmeh said, "there are elements of a state in existence already, and in the Oslo agreement we can find texts referring to Gaza and West Bank as being one geographic unit."

In addition, "there is a statement that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinians." He added that the only real way of achieving a lasting peace is to involve all the interested parties, which means addressing the Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian issues at the same time.

Low expectations for Middle East summit

Continued from page 1

ers on both sides. Netanyahu faces strong opposition from Jewish settlers and from some members of his own coalition government, who have threatened to bolt if he signs a West Bank agreement. On Tuesday, lawmaker Haim Porat, a member of the National Religious Party and the chairman of a key parliamentary committee, said he would dissolve the government and force early elections if Netanyahu agrees to the pullout.

Recent media reports that Netanyahu might soon name Ariel Sharon, a hawkish Cabinet member and former general, to the open post of foreign minister were widely viewed here as attempts to calm the right wing before an

expected withdrawal.

Arafat, in turn, must contend with opposition from extremist Islamic groups, including Hamas, as well as a Palestinian public that is increasingly disillusioned with the 5-year-old peace process; many Palestinians argue that it has not significantly improved their lives.

"People don't see a lot of change," said Palestinian political science professor Ali Jirbawi of Birzeit University in the West Bank. "There are still Israeli roadblocks and checkpoints. The occupation is still here."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Inter.Con hosts meeting

HOTEL INTER-Continental Jordan is hosting the Sales and Marketing meeting for all Directors of Sales and Marketing of Inter-Continental Hotels & Resorts in the Middle East and Africa region, headed by Mr Stephen Banks, between 3-7 October 1998. This yearly event is organized by the Inter-Continental Hotels & Resorts and this is the first meeting held at the Hotel Inter-Continental Jordan since 1980. The participants will also attend a course on Advanced Strategic selling organized by Mercuri International.

Hotel Inter-Continental Jordan has planned an exciting programme for the participants to experience the unique attributes of Jordanian hospitality.

World-wide car venue in Paris

AIR FRANCE is pleased to draw your attention to the Paris Motor Show, which will be held in Paris—Porte de Versailles Exhibition Hall between 1-11 October. This exhibition, which takes place every two years, is one of the most famous in the world and among other exhibitions regularly held in Paris. Air France will take you directly to Paris in the most comfortable way with the Espace and Tempo cabins. Air France operates four non-stop flights to Paris out of Amman, departing at the most convenient time of the day 7:30 (winter time 6:30) and arriving in Paris just before mid-day. At Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris, Air France offers you a choice of connections to more than 200 destinations in the world.

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JORDAN

W E E K



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Royal Decree

A Royal Decree was issued this week delaying the ordinary session of the Lower House of Parliament until 28 November. This is according to Paragraph 1 of article 78 of the Constitution. Deputy Mahmoud Al Kharabsheh, rapporteur of the Legal Committee, said the House was due to start its session as from 1 November. However, His Majesty King Hussein has the power to delay the reconvening for a further two months. Kharabsheh added that if the King is absent from the country for more than four months, or not able to practice his duties, then the Lower House would have the right to meet to discuss the issue. He said that by 14 November, the King would have been out of the country for four months. He added that if the King doesn't remain before that time, then the Lower House would have to hold an extraordinary session for at least one or two days.

No price hike for fuel

Dr Hani Al Mideh, Minister of Energy said that the prices of fuel—gas and kerosene oils—will not be increased this winter. The minister, who also holds the water portfolio, said that Jordan has a good stock of these oils, and added that gas cylinders are readily available on the market.

Changes at State Security

Prime Minister Dr Fayez Al Tarawneh is making a number of changes at the State Security Court. Military judge Colonel Youssef Faouri now becomes the President of the Court. Majors Tayel Al Raghad, Ahmed Al Hrahshah, Abdul Al Kareem Hmaad, Hussien Al Tarawneh, Ahmed Al Omash have been appointed as judges in the court. In addition, Majors Youssef Al Adwan and Naef Masaadhi will become the next Attorney General's of the court. Their assistants will be Majors Mohamed Hejazi and Mahmoud Obidat.

Journalists

Rapporteur of the Public Liberties Committee of the Lower House, Mohammad Al Azaideh, called on the authorities to revoke the lawsuits against journalists. He said that there are currently around 50 to 70 lawsuits pending against journalists in Jordan. Al Azaideh said the file against the press must be closed.

Viagra

Minister of Health Dr Naef Al Ajlouni stressed that the Viagra potency pill is still forbidden in Jordan. He said that before it can go on the market in the country it would have to be evaluated by specialized committees to see whether it has any side effects on human health.



New Japanese diplomat praises Middle East

TOKYO (Petra)—Newly-appointed Director of the Middle East and North Africa desk at the Japanese Foreign Ministry Takahiro Kajawa paid tribute to the new tendencies of economic openness and flexibility in the Middle Eastern countries, particularly in Jordan.

"Such positive changes in the region's economies will help develop economic and trade relations between Japan and the countries in the region," Kajawa said in an interview with a Petra correspondent in Tokyo.

Kajawa said, "Japan's basic stand would not change and oil supplies from the region will remain Japan's top priorities. However, we view the Middle East as a very important region, politically and economically, not only for Japan but for the entire world."

The Japanese diplomat said establishing peace in the Middle East has gained regional and international importance.

"Therefore we have supported the peace process ever since it was launched in Madrid and later in Oslo," he added. He said that Japan is interested in developing its relations with the region, not only in the economic field, but in industrial and cultural areas as well.

"That is why Japan provides these countries with our expertise and advanced technologies," he said, "but there is an intricate interrelationship between the economic and political problems, and it is

clear that settling political issues is vital for improving economies, because companies always fear political instability."

On the stalled Middle East peace process, Kajawa said that things were not moving in the right direction, but that the peace process was not dead. "There is room to maneuver by both parties, and a breakthrough can be reached," he added. "The next year will be crucial for us all, because the implementation of the self-rule agreement should begin by May 5th 1999."

Tangible progress must be achieved before this date, otherwise we will be facing a dangerous situation," Kajawa said. On Jordan's stand regarding the policy of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, Kajawa said, "We hope that Netanyahu will be more flexible, because this is what is required to reactivate the peace process."

He (Netanyahu) should take decisions to conclude the peace process before May 4th," the Japanese official said.

"We share the Arab states concern about Israel's nuclear capabilities as well," he said. Israel declined to sign international treaties banning the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Japanese diplomat denied as groundless news reports on cooperation between Japan and Israel, to develop the Israeli anti-missile Arrow missile.

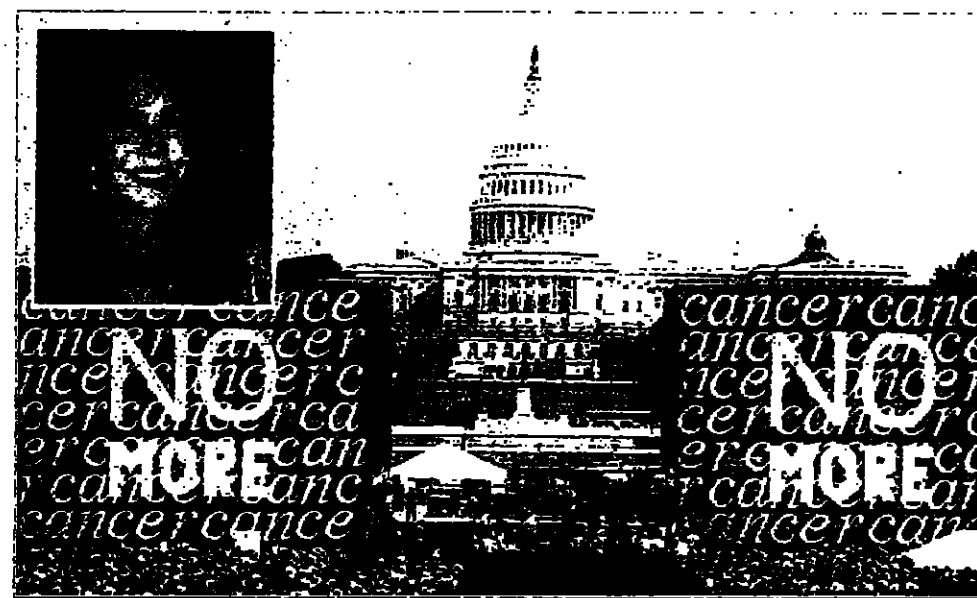
Queen Noor addresses US cancer rally

WASHINGTON (Petra)—Tens of thousands of cancer survivors, their families and friends, gathered in Washington DC this week in a national rally, "The March," to fight against cancer. Her Majesty Queen Noor, Vice President Al Gore and numerous political activists and other personalities spoke out at "The March."

Vice-President Gore said that each person at the rally represented "a renewed commitment to end cancer, and that the United States declared war on cancer more than quarter of a century ago." He vowed that this generation would be the generation that wins this war.

In her remarks, Queen Noor said that she had heard of this rally from her daughter, Princess Iman, "who had decided to participate and use her faith, love and optimism to benefit many others suffering from this cruel enemy." She noted that in this year alone, while 10 million people worldwide will be stricken with cancer, 15 percent of these cases are preventable.

The Queen added that she would like to join His Majesty King Hussein in expressing their thanks and gratitude for all the love and prayers, not



only from our Jordanian family, but from people throughout the world, and here in the United States where he is undergoing treatment.

"These prayers, and that spirit of family, mean so much to all of us and they make all the difference," she said. Queen Noor added that the impact of this rally would make a difference to the health prospects of people all around the world, by placing

cancer care as a top priority on social and national agendas.

Jordan's satellite links with the United States, for example, provides live telemedical educational conferences, medical consultations and exchange of information, which is vital for the advancement of health care and raising medical standards in both countries.

Queen Noor said that the

force behind this national rally is the "power of the people," citing the example of Al Amal Center in Amman as a comprehensive cancer care institute that was created with the power of the people.

Earlier, King Hussein and Queen Noor met with the organizers of the March, and King Hussein expressed his support and admiration for their efforts.

Nature and Wildlife preservation at the forefront

By Ghassan Joha
Star Staff Writer

UNDER THE banner of "Wildlife—A Wealth For All," a joint cooperation agreement was formed between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), on 26 September.

The initiative was launched by the Minister of Agriculture, Mijhem Al Khreisha, and the RSCN president, Anes Muasher, and aims to organize the fieldwork between the two institutions. The Ministry of Agriculture has a total 472 ambulants working in the field of conservation and wildlife preservation, all over the country. "The joint cooperation agreement between the Ministry and RSCN is a step forward to implementing the CITES agreement, which will increase wildlife and protect the local habitats," adds the Minister.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), was the result of a worldwide initiative which came into force in 1973, after a total of 143 countries agreed to take action to protect nature and wildlife. Jordan signed the convention in 1979, "to make a commitment to its wildlife, and to motivate both the public and private sectors to conserve the wildlife and its habitats," declared Mr Al Khreisha.

Mr Muasher, praised the meeting, and called it a "good opportunity to review all the conservation efforts." He added, "The main objective of the meeting was to find the best way to increase the coordination between both the public and private sectors in order to protect the nature and its inhabitants."

Mr Muasher called for the full implementation of all the articles contained in the Cultivation Law, relating to the conservation of environment. He stated that over 50 thousand tourists and wildlife lovers visit Israel every year, to observe wildlife. "There is no reason why this cannot be the case for Jordan as well," he declared, "and focusing our efforts on eco-tourism will benefit the land and its inhabitants at the same time."

The RSCN, founded in 1966 under the patronage of Her Majesty King Hussein and Queen Noor, aims to protect and conserve the natural resources



Al Khreisha (L), the Minister of Agriculture, with Anes Muasher, the President of the RSCN

and wildlife diversity throughout the Kingdom. The society supervises six wildlife reserves, and cooperates with the Birdlife International to preserve some additional areas dedicated to birds.

Mr Al Khreisha said that, "It is time to begin to implement laws that will reverse the current abuse of nature and resources." He said that both the Ministry of Agriculture and RSCN share the same duties and concerns towards nature.

During the final part of the meeting, officials from the Ministry and RSCN established a new mechanism to enable officials from the Forestry Dept., to have greater access to their lands, and give them wider powers to fine those violating the hunting laws. They also agreed upon the best way to implement the CITES agreement, increase public awareness on wildlife, as well as organizing media campaigns to highlight the environmental issues.

Mahmoud Yassin, director of conservation at the RSCN, said during the meeting that, "Finding a way to best serve and protect the Kingdom's wildlife habitats, and thus conserve the living diversity of nature, is so important to human life and the environment."

The meeting ended up with an agreement to hold another two meetings in the near future, that will incorporate both the northern and southern agricultural departments.

Amman to host cultural week

AMMAN (Star)—Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, and with the cooperation of the Ministry of Tourism and the Municipality of Greater Amman, the Friends of Archaeology (FOA) invite you to participate in the celebrations of the first National Cultural Heritage Week, between 9-15 October.

With the expectation that the event will become an annual festival, the focus of this year's activities carries the title of "Protecting Archaeological Heritage."

The opening ceremony will take place at the Amman Citadel, Al Qal'a, starting at 8 O'clock in the morning. The site was chosen as symbolic of the continuity of human settlement throughout the history of Jordan. The backdrop to the

opening show is the domed entrance hall of the impressive Umayyad Palace.

There will be a walk through the historic sites of downtown Amman from the Citadel to the Municipal Hall of Amman in Ras Al Ain.

An exhibition area at the Amman Municipal Hall will be opened at 10.30 am, which includes works conducted by the various archaeological institutes. A book show and children's artwork display will also be on show. The exhibition runs daily until 14 October.

The closing ceremony takes place at the Odeon, near the Roman Theatre, at 7 pm. It is promised to be an excellent cultural evening, with a dramatic recital of the Arabic play 'Al Da'ira', written by Hayat

Huwalk Atieh. Tickets for the play are available at the FOA center at the Fourth Circle.

Sponsorship and donations have been made for this one-of-a-kind event by the Canada Fund, Canadian International Development Agency, Consolidated Contracting Company, Arab Potash Company, Industrial

Bank for Development, Bank of Jordan, Coca Cola, Zara Investment-Ayla Residence, Transmed Jordan, and the Municipality of Greater Amman.

For more information please call the FOA center, Tel/Fax: 5930682, or send an E-mail to foa@nets.com.jo.

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Press Cocktail Press

Edited by Ibrahim Odch

Dimona, the curse!

This week Jordanian columnists talked about the Dimona nuclear reactor in Israel. Here, we have two views. In his column in *Ad Dastour* Mohammad Sharif Al Jayousi raised a very important topic for Jordan and the rest of the Arab World. He started off with the story about the harassment of Al Sane', the Arab deputy in the Israeli Knesset for Beir Al Sane'. The investigation with Al Sane' started after he led a demonstration at the gates of Dimona nuclear plant last June, after Israeli newspapers published reports about a potential radiation leak in the reactor.

The columnist referred to Israeli newspaper reports about the dumping nuclear waste in al Naqab. Other reports talked about the dangers of the old buildings of the reactor which are old and unreliable. The writer is concerned about the refusal of the Israeli authorities to allow international investigators to inspect the reactor. The Israelis even refused to sign any agreements to this effect. This leaves us with very little official information about the dangers, duties and budget of the reactor. Because of these, Al Sane' called on the Arab and Islamic worlds to work more closely on a collective strategy to face this potential danger. The writer urges the Arab and Islamic worlds to pressure Israel to put a stop to nuclear testing in the region, and allow international inspection teams entry to their nuclear facilities.

Mohammed Kharoub in *Al Rai* on the other hand concentrated on a different angle. He criticized what he called the double standards of the International Atomic Agency. The Agency refused to look into the Israeli nuclear file, and decided to dismiss the unanimous Arab request for the inspection of Israeli nuclear facilities. While, he says, the same Agency insisted that Iraq produces certificates to prove it does not possess any weapons of mass destruction. The same is true of North Korea. The Agency demands that these countries allow its inspectors to investigate and monitor military installations.

However, the Agency shows no interest whatsoever in the Israeli nuclear programme. Israel which is armed to its teeth with weapons of mass destruction, has more than 200 nuclear warheads, still refuses to join the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, and whose nuclear plant in Dimona poses a threat which could be as fatal as Chernobyl, apparently does not cause the Agency any worries!

Israel, Kharoub says, has power and status in the UN, and this clout is reflected in the vote of the various UN agencies.

On the other hand, the political clout of the Arabs is virtually nonexistent in these agencies. It is true the Arabs have achieved some success in the General Assembly, but unfortunately these carry no weight. The PLO, for instance, was only recently given an "observer status" in the International Atomic Agency. This means it can attend its meetings but has no voting rights.

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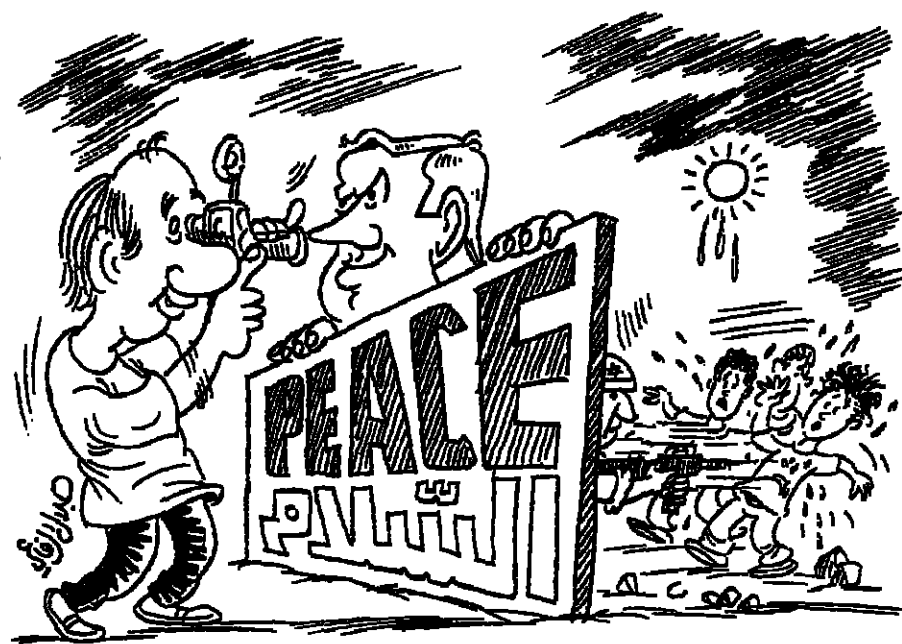


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Reflecting the Change



Our Say...

A Peace charade

THE AMERICANS meddled as usual in the Middle East peace process. The Israelis successfully obstructed once again any possibility of a breakthrough in the deadlocked talks. Palestinian President Yasser Arafat remained a mute witness as the other two literally played ducks and drakes with the issue of Palestinian statehood.

Arafat's meetings with US President Bill Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington on Monday and Tuesday only served to restrain him from telling the members of the UN General Assembly his intention of declaring the Palestinian state on May 4, 1999.

The snail-paced talks underway in Washington seem more a charade than sincere attempts to make some progress. Clinton's talks with Arafat and Netanyahu is only a means for distracting the world's attention from the sizzling sex scandal of Monica Lewinsky dogging the president. The Americans have no new proposals to offer. On its part, Israel has not yet fully consented to the watered-down US suggestion of troop withdrawal from 13 per cent of the West Bank. There is no change in the situation despite the hectic parleys in New York and Washington. The trip has further exposed the limited manoeuvrability of Arafat, and it is sure to undermine his credibility among the Palestinians.

Both the US and Israel, each in its own way, have marginalised the Oslo Accords so thoroughly that Arafat finds himself in a ridiculous position whenever he demands that Israel should abide by the accords.

When he announced at the Arab foreign ministers' meeting in Cairo a few weeks ago that he might declare Palestinian independence on May 4, 1999, he had the Oslo framework in mind. But that framework is not in place any more.

Instead of face-saving statements, diplomatic obfuscations and dilatory tactics, there is a need to clarify the situation in plain, and even blunt, language. The reality is that Israel refuses to honour the Oslo Accords. The Americans are not interested in its implementation. The Palestinians, who believe in it, do not have the political and diplomatic clout to ensure that it is enforced. The idea of declaring the Palestinian state on May 4 was a desperate attempt to keep its provisions alive.

If the Oslo Accords are dead — and everyone involved is aware of it though no one wants to say it — then there is an urgent need to come up with an alternative agenda. There is a policy vacuum in the Middle East. The Palestinian leader must now demand that a new time-bound agenda be drawn up immediately, and they should use the opportunity to close some of the loopholes in the Oslo agreements. The charade has to end, and Arafat must take the initiative to put a stop to it.

Politics, voting and the new government

By a Star Staff Writer

THE NEW Government of Dr Faysal Al Tarawneh has at last gained the full confidence of the Lower House of Parliament. After extensive talks with deputies, the Government was able to secure 64 show of hands in the final vote of confidence session last week. This is the highest number of votes since 1989 when the cabinet of Prime Minister Mudar Badran received 64 votes.

However, last week's vote had a few surprises. The results of the latest vote was known in advance as three Parliamentary blocs and some independents — 53 deputies in all — made it clear that they would support the Government.

However, there appears to be a void when one looks deeply at the composition of Lower House. The absence of an "organized opposition" has created a lack of diversity in the political makeup of the Kingdom. Observers say that the boycott of the 1997 elections by the Islamic Brotherhood created a "feeble opposition".

Three well-known opposition deputies surprised many when they voted for the government. Two of these were Islamists. Dr Abdallah Akaleh and Mohammad Azaydeh are known for changing their opinions. They ignored the Islamist boycott during the 1997 parliamentary elections — leading to their subsequent expulsion from the party — and now they voted for the Government.

The other surprise was when Mansour Seif Al Din Murad — a man of leftist persuasion — dropped everything and voted for the Government. He joined Bathist deputy Akef Afaleh and one of

Eye on Jordan



the opposition leaders Mohammad Oran, secretary general of the Arab Land Party.

Meanwhile, those who wanted to maintain close relations with the National Constitutional Party voted for the Government. As one can expect, the NCP's general secretary Abd Al Hadi Majali also gave his blessing.

Yet, there was more than meets the eye. The unified speech which the 53 deputies formulated called on the new cabinet to cut Jordanian ties with Israel and to stop all the appearances of normalization with Israel. They urged the Government — although indirectly — to adopt a similar stand to that carried out by the African countries concerning the sanctions imposed on Iraq.

In addition, 38 speeches delivered

within the three sessions tackled the internal affairs, especially the water crisis.

Former Minister of Water Samir Qawar addressed Parliament in this regard. Political observers later said that his speech was very important, as most of the information contained in his speech proved that former officials were well-informed about the contaminated water problem.

Still on the water issue, Salameh Al Hiary, who pursues the file of the contaminated water under the dome, abstained with his colleague Ahmad Imab. They represent the centrist trend in Parliament. Their abstention shows that there is still disquiet in the dome.

From another angle, there were some surprises in those who voted against the Government. The biggest surprise came from former chief of the General Intelligence Department, Mahmoud Kharabsheh. He was backed by his constituents for casting his

no vote. Dr Ahmad Odeidi Abbadi, a Jordanian ultra-nationalist, who also gave a no-vote, accused some ministers of corruption and spoke against those who monopolized their government position. In his speech, after he received the confidence of the House, Tarawneh avoided talk on certain issues. Regarding normalizing relations with Israel and freezing the Wadi Araba agreement, he said that "peace is a strategic and national need."

Tarawneh also evaded discussions on breaking the UN sanctions on Iraq which have badly affected the Kingdom's economy, by reestablishing the previously prosperous Jordanian-Iraqi commercial ties that were cut at the commencement of the Gulf War.

A view from America

Was it a falling Starr?

By Carrie Nelle Moye

A fair proportion of US (and world) television viewers armed themselves for a major Clinton explosion/implosion the morning of September 21, as his video taped testimony before the grand jury was about to be aired.

Little did we know that what was to follow would be a major revelation of another order. There had been so many warnings as to what to expect. Parents were admonished not to allow their children to view the testimony.

Dan Rather of CBS even spoke directly to young viewers telling them that they usually would be seeing "Tallie Tubies," but that today there was going to be something else.

Some of us refused to watch, for we were so absolutely tired and disgusted by the length and depth the Starr inquiry. Others felt that they could not miss this historical event, no matter how distasteful either the probe or the revelations might be. Regardless, millions of us watched, and were pleasantly surprised.

No, it was not pleasant to see our President being grilled about such personal matters. Whether we are for or against Clinton, most of us respect the office of the President and do not want that office to be tarnished publicly. The old adage of not airing one's dirty laundry in public, springs to mind.

Yet, President Clinton, known for his inability to curb his temper, could have given the Biblical Job lessons, as his patience was more than just admirable.

As the prosecuting attorney pounded and glided him from every conceivable angle, to get Clinton to admit to perjury, the President maintained his dignity. Yes, he was evasive, but as famed defense attorney Roy Black said in a subsequent interview, "legally he was forced to be." Black explained to the lay public that any defense attorney would have advised his client — in this case Clinton — to answer precisely as he did, for indeed, it was obvious to any viewer that they were attempting to trap the President.

I think that very many of us dreaded viewing the tapes, not just because of the embarrassment it would cause to the nation — that our leaders would spend so much money and time on a personal matter — but because we had seen the President truly mis-handle his initial statement of "apology" on August 17 — the evening of the very day he had taped his deposition.

We had concluded, naturally, that his deposition was going to show him in the same light. The exact opposite happened. Clinton handled himself masterfully when discussing the delicate matter. He had the most private parts of his per-

sonal life revealed. He was very unhappy, but he still behaved like a statesman.

As this is being written, there are reports of rumors floating around Washington that some sort of deal is in the offering.

Our politicians are inclined that way; they respond to the mood of the public. The public most definitely felt that the Starr investigation went on long enough — from an initial inquiry into a real estate deal in Arkansas to a personal vendetta regarding the President's most intimate, if indiscreet, personal life. The public was disgusted.

For a time, it seemed as though Clinton would be forced to resign, so the business of the nation could be continued and the personal life of Clinton would be pushed to the recesses of our minds. However, after viewing the video tapes, it now appears that there is a backlash of support for the President. Virtually everyone, for or against Clinton, felt that the subject had been pushed to the extreme. We all wish Clinton had a clean moral slate, but who does these days?

It is the old proverb of people living in glass houses not throwing stones. Most of us like to feel our lives are above reproach, but surely each of us harbors some memory of having done something we would prefer not have disclosed to the public. Although the depth of

such behavior varies from person to person, we all feel that we are entitled to privacy. Certainly, a politician is subject to much closer scrutiny, but when do we reach the point of invasion that goes beyond concern for the public good and slides into the mire of a soap opera?

Anyone who still thinks Kenneth Starr was apolitical in his investigation, should note that in the report released last week, he failed to show the statement by Monica Lewinsky where she overtly said that no one — neither the President nor any of his friends — ever asked her to lie or ever promised her a job. This is extremely significant, both in its denotation and in the context of the entire investigation on the part of Starr.

Yes, every one of us is sorry Clinton involved himself in an affair which the American public does not accept. Our culture is clear on this. We know these things are common, but we are not ready for them.

We are embarrassed for Clinton's family, especially his daughter. We are embarrassed that the world community is laughing at us: some because of the event itself and others because of our reaction to it.

Nevertheless, most of us feel Clinton has been a good President. We do not wish to see this matter take up more time. We wish that the President is allowed to get on with the business of running the country.

Middle East Beat

by Khairi Janbek

Troubled region

HARDLY A day passes without our region being embroiled in one potential calamity or another. Each time the remedy is at hand, but for reasons of pride and prejudice, the players of the region cannot see it. Whatever happened to trust, respect, and cooperation among equals.

Here in Jordan, the Hashemite leadership has greatly influenced the prospect of unity among the nations of the Middle East. However, this has not stopped the many alliances and counter alliances that continue to bring chaos to the region.

The most recent escalation between Iran and Israel is a prime example, as it drew Syria into the fray as well, with threats of ballistic missiles and immeasurable destruction. In addition to the aforementioned escalation, Iran is upping the ante against the Taliban, and vice versa. Iran, while attempting to reach a reconciliation with the USA and the West, is in danger of a head-on collision with Pakistan, and no one is sure how long Pakistan will remain neutral in the event of hostilities breaking out.

Closer to home, the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations seem to be going round in an endless circle, and the eminent declaration of a Palestinian state seems to be the only key to unlock the stalemate. Whether the proposed declaration is a threat or a promise, remains to be seen. Yasser Arafat continues to hold this particular card close to his chest, in a bid to push Netanyahu back onto the path of the Oslo Agreements. But will this chain of action-reaction lead to the formation of a Palestinian state, or to a resumption of armed conflict again?

Meanwhile, the US is attracting criticism over their attempts at Kurdish reconciliation between Talibani and Barzani. The move has aroused the suspicions of both Iraq and Turkey. The latter is already embroiled in a conflict with the separatist PKK, and the move by the US has forced Turkey to raise its level of diplomatic relations with Iraq, with an Ambassador to Baghdad.

The rational goes, that if Iraq can be pressured on the Kurdish issue, then why not Turkey? Ironically, Turkey (a close ally of the US) is being pushed into conducting relations with Iraq. To complicate matters worse, Syria is building a coalition umbrella with one Kurdish faction, which may complement the American efforts in Iraqi Kurdistan.

It seems obvious that the age of proxies among brothers or neighbors may be coming to an abrupt end, and the real muscle-men behind the scenes may actually become the combatants. This should serve as a clear signal to all: if regional disputes are not sorted out by consultations and negotiations at the outset, the slippery slope of war and destruction is the only outcome.

The US must realize that if it wants to play a major role in conflict resolution, then it must act according to the ethos of partnership. It cannot set its own agenda without consulting with those most concerned. By partnership, we mean creating goodwill among all nations. It is not only partnership with the USA that is important, but partnership among all of us in the region. Let all the countries of the region knock their heads together, and make this the main priority.



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat shakes hands with Secretary General Kofi Annan after speaking before the General Assembly at the United Nations in New York 28 September. In his speech, Arafat urged the assembly to support the establishment of a Palestinian state as a five year transitional period ends next 4 May.

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Lurie's NewsCartoon



Business scene

■ A 6% decline in Jordan's trade deficit was registered during the first half of this year. Figures showed that both Jordan's exports and imports declined by about JD 150 million, from the same period last year. The whole trade deficit had declined by JD 50 million.

■ A joint show of Jordanian-Kuwaiti industrial products was opened last week, 26 September, over 80 companies from both countries are participating in the show, the first of its kind in Jordan. The show, displaying a diversity of products, runs until 2 October.

■ Three contracts were approved by the Cabinet earlier this week, in cooperation with the German government. The contracts relate to transferring water from Deir Alla to western Amman, developing Amman's water network projects, as well as transferring waste water from Amman to Khirbet Al Samra and developing the Ain Ghazal Purification Station. The total cost of the three contracts is expected to be around DM 117 million (JD 49.2 million).

■ The fourth compensation payments for the 6,200 Jordanian returnees—'A' and 'C' categories—will be paid during the next few days. The United Nations Compensation Committee will deliver the money to the Central Bank early October. The total amount has been estimated at \$15.5 million.

■ Minister of Energy, Hand Al Malki, said earlier that the 'oleic stone' is the only alternative energy source in Jordan. During a special symposium on new technologies in oil exploration held last week, Dr Khalid Shreidah estimated that there is about 40 billion tons of 'oleic stones' in Jordan.

■ The Conference of the General Union of Arab Trade, Industrial, Agricultural and Tourism Chambers will be held in Amman on 31 October. The meeting will discuss the possibility of uniting the Arab trade free-zones, as well as increasing investment within them. A special exhibition highlighting the past and future business in Jordan, will take place during the conference, which will run for five days.

The challenge of the new millennium

By Ilham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

ECONOMIC ANALYSTS expect that the 21st Century will herald the establishment of a worldwide free-trade zone. Consequently, it is imperative that all nations ensure that mechanisms are in place to make sure that their economies can meet this challenge. Analysts are saying if you want a share of the pie, then you had better make sure your kitchen is in order.

By the year 2005, the world markets are expected to be open to everyone—the world will become one small village that knows no boundaries, and where no restrictions are recognized. There will be free access for commodities, capital flows, manpower, and most important of all, the free exchange of experience, skills and advanced technology.

Jordan is trying its utmost to join this race, and has been entering into international blocs and organizations, with the purpose of meeting international standards and specifications. This should guarantee free access for Jordanian products in the new millennium—no matter how diversified the new market place will be.

Jordan's entrance into an EU partnership agreement last year is one example of this official policy, as are the ongoing negotiations aimed at gaining 'entry into the World Trade Organization.

However, analysts are saying that having agreements is all well and good, but that the Jordanian private sector is simply not efficient enough at the moment to

meet this challenge. What is needed are steps to make the private sector aware of requirements for EU partnership and the WTO agreement.

Mr Khairuddin Shukri, the chairman of the Jordan Exporters and Producers Association for Fruit and Vegetables (JEPAFV), told *The Star* that, "We as exporters and producers are overwhelmed to see Jordan adopting a policy of trade liberalization, but the real question is can we survive without the enforcement of rules, laws, standards and specifications on both imports and exports?" (Established in 1994, the JEPAFV promotes fruit and vegetable exports, and explores new markets for these products. It also works to acquire moral and financial support from the authorities in Jordan, to simplify the process of exports, and to reduce taxes and fees imposed on their produce.)

Agriculture is just one of the many Jordanian markets that could be affected by the new agreements, which will introduce stricter quality control and compliance regulations, before any product is allowed onto the global market.

The problem facing the agricultural sector at the moment, appears to be a marketing one. Available statistics reveal that in 1989, Jordan exported 567,106 tons of fruits and vegetables at a value of JD 147 million, but in 1997 this figure had fallen to 355,762 tons at a reduced value of JD 70 million.

To identify the reasons behind this dramatic fall of exports, and to explore ways

of finding a solution, Mr Shukri spoke freely about the future challenges facing the agricultural sector.

Referring to the drop in exports, Mr Shukri commented that, "Our main fault was that we used to depend on one market—the Gulf market—which we thought was eternal and would last forever. The Gulf War changed things for the worse, but more important, than this, is that the oil rich countries of the Gulf region introduced high-tech agriculture mechanisms and now produce their own crops."

A good example of this is Saudi Arabia, which absorbed 216,100 out of the overall 567,106 tons of produce exported in 1989. "However, this year, the total amount of produce exported to the Saudi market has been only 26,937 tons, so the market has changed dramatically. What we need is a marketing strategy based on the diversification of our export markets, and this has only been attempted so far by the private sector on a very small scale," Mr Shukri reiterated.

"However such a strategy could be implemented on a large scale by a joint effort between the Ministry of Agriculture, Trade and Industry, Transportation, Planning and the Jordan Val-



Shukri

ley Authority, in order to form a chain that runs from the producer to the consumer," the JEPAFV chairman said.

The problems facing this vital sector—one that provides the state coffers with vast revenues—stem from the shortage of proper and well examined planning. After 20 years of experience as a farmer in the Jordan Valley, and 18 years of knowledge as an exporter to Europe, Mr Shukri should be the man to listen too. Summing up the issue, he says, "It is high time that the public and private sectors sit down and identify a strategic plan in order to reach our common objectives." Mr Shukri, who is also the managing director of the Modern Valley Farms, told *The Star* that, "In the past, producers and exporters have taken the

short-term, low-risk attitude, and have preferred domestic markets, rather than the medium-term, high-return approach that the export markets can offer. This is seen in government policy as well, which follows supporting prices for certain crops, like tomatoes and onions for example, and applies import restrictions.

He highlighted one fact that backs up all what he has been saying, and shows that the competitive advantage of the Valley has been neglected for too long. "The government is protecting the production of bananas, but this crop requires at least one thousand liters of good quality water for every one kilogram grown. It is not a labor incentive crop either, and if it were not for the heavy duties and taxes imposed on imports (420 fils per kg), nobody would grow them in this country," said Mr Shukri.

The case of Jordanian banana production is very apt indeed. Unless procedures are introduced to toughen up Jordanian markets, producers and exporters will assuredly 'slip up' at the advent of the new millennium.

Business Chronicle

Ignore employment, wages and pensions at your peril

IN A positive step to solve the problems facing a large spectrum of Jordanian society, Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh—in his first press conference last week—promised that his government will embark on a series of bold measures to curb the levels of poverty and unemployment. In addition, Tarawneh said his government would reorganize the labor market, and provide workers with incentives in order to increase ambition and creativity in the marketplace.

There is a growing interest among all decision makers to improve the economic status of Jordanians, especially the lower classes and those under the poverty line. Anyhow, governments ignore this issue at their peril, and there is nothing more likely to instill discontent in the workforce (and so the constituents) as declining standards of living.

Dr Tarawneh promises that the situation will get better soon, now that the powers that be realize the true extent of the problem. As they say, the first step to solving any problem is to admit that you have a problem! Should these good intentions make there way to implementation, then it will be good news for many Jordanians; some of whom are still waiting for their pension payments to be paid.

The national pension scheme has also attracted a lot of attention, as pensioners are claiming that the rocketing prices of consumer goods, as well as other basic services like water, electricity, and fuel, has actually diminished the real worth of their monthly checks.

The same problem is affecting wage packets as well, which have remained the same for a long while, despite the rise in everyday expenditures. This has prompted calls from some quarters for the establishment of a minimum wage, which will balance the relationship between wages, and the price of goods and services.

However, unless a substantial change does take place, the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' will continue to get wider, and this does not bode well for the Government.

EU finance ministers reaffirm optimism

By Wolfgang Munchau
and Michael Smith

EUROPEAN UNION finance ministers played down last week the international economic crisis, insisting the EU was "conspicuous as a pole of stability" at a time of global uncertainty.

EU finance ministers, meeting in Vienna, reiterated their optimism about European growth prospects in spite of financial crises in Asia and Russia. Austria, holder of the rotating presidency of the EU, said in its final communiqué that the prospect of economic and monetary union had helped stabilise exchange rate movements.

Gordon Brown, the UK chancellor, underlined at the meeting the position of the Group of Seven industrialised nations, that the balance of economic risk had now

shifted away from inflation towards slower growth.

But there was no general support for a concerted interest rate cut by European countries.

However, ministers took a step towards deciding who should speak on behalf of euro-zone countries at meetings of international institutions such as the G7 and the International Monetary Fund, in spite of strong reservations from Germany and central bankers. Speaking at the end of the meeting, which included central bank governors, Rudolf Edlinger, Austrian finance minister, said ministers had agreed to finalise arrangements for a euro-zone representative at international meetings by December's Vienna summit of EU leaders.

However, the proposals met with a cool response from some central bankers

and from the outgoing German government that has long argued that a euro-zone representative a political counterpart to the European Central Bank might erode its independence.

Hans Tietmeyer, president of the Bundesbank, the German central bank, said: "One must differentiate between supra-national responsibility for monetary policy and those that remain national responsibility."

In addition, the countries participating in monetary union are still divided about how the euro-zone should be represented by politicians in international forums, although they agreed that Wim Duisenberg, president of the ECB, would have observer status at the IMF and would participate in G7 meetings.

Financial Times Syndication



James Riley, a clerk in the Eurodollar futures pit at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, relays trade information to phone clerks on 29 September. Trade turned volatile after the Fed lowered interest rates by a quarter point, as many analysts had expected.

By Hugo Dixon

IMF RESCUE packages are inadequately funded and impose conditions guaranteed to make them ineffective. Creditors must be persuaded to join in salvage operations.

The International Monetary Fund has been widely criticized for its failed rescue packages, particularly in Russia and Indonesia. Yet, the little bit of criticism has focused on packages, their biggest defect: the maths does not add up.

With global financial turmoil far from over and suggestions that a rescue package is being assembled for Latin America, it is essential lessons are learnt. Another inadequately funded bail-out could be blown apart by the markets.

In both the recent packages seemingly huge sums of money were promised—\$23bn for Russia and \$43bn for Indonesia. In fact, the offer from IMF and its Group of Seven allies was not what it seemed.

The immediate source of the crisis in both countries was an inability to pay debt: \$40bn short-term government debt, and interest payments in Russia; and more than \$70bn foreign-currency corporate debt in Indonesia.

The IMF programmes had three defects. First, there was not enough money to pay off all the debt. Second, the money was not available quickly enough but was, instead, to be dribbled out as the country delivered on policy out of the commitments. Third, the terms of the deals meant most of the funds could not even be used to pay the debts.

What then was the money for? In theory, it was to build confidence. The idea was that private creditors would be fooled by the headline numbers into thinking the countries no longer had a repayment problem and would be happy

The lifeboat is off course

to roll over the debts. This might have worked if Indonesia's President Suharto had not back-tracked on policy commitments and Russia's Duma had not voted down the IMF-agreed fiscal tightening. When political obstacles appeared, investors quickly figured that the IMF's sums did not add up, and ran for the exits. In the circumstances, the money was used in a vain attempt to prop up the currency. In Russia, some \$9bn was wasted in this way.

There are two important lessons to be learned. The first is that the IMF should stop providing funds to support currencies, that might seem odd. After all, weren't the Asian and Russian crises all about plummeting currencies? Well, not exactly. The heart of the problem in each case was a debt crisis. Currency crises accompanied these and, to some extent, complicated them. But they were not the main event.

This is not to say that maintaining a fixed exchange rate is necessarily bad. It can, for example, help squeeze hyperinflation out of an economy. But it should be clear that, in an era of free capital flows, exchange rates are extremely vulnerable to swings in confidence. They can only be held where the



For how long the crises will effect the Russian economy?

authorities are willing and able to follow extremely tight macroeconomic policies. If a country is prepared to undergo such harsh disciplines using its own resources, fine. Gambling the

IMF's resources on such an adventure is not sensible.

The second lesson is that the IMF should be sure its maths makes sense. If the IMF decides to lend money, it

should be available to pay off debt. It should also be provided quickly enough and in sufficient quantities. This does not mean the IMF should lend unlimited sums and provide cash unless there was a good chance of getting it back. This means the country concerned has to give credible assurances that it is going to pursue appropriate economic policies.

If such assurances can be given and the IMF has plenty of cash, fine: act as a lender of last resort. However, it is more likely that the IMF will not be completely confident that policy promises will be met, and that it will not have enough money to finance a full bail-out.

In such a situation the solution is to bail in—actively co-opt—the private creditors at the same time that it provides money. A traditional, inadequately funded IMF programme with conditions attached would work if banks and bondholders simultaneously rolled over enough of their debts—or even forgave part of them. In a sense, this is what the IMF and G7 did in South Korea (a partial success story); the biggest banks were told that no official money would be provided unless they extended their

loans too.

The snag is that, unless creditors agree, such action would amount to a debt moratorium, and the IMF is reluctant to go down that road. There is a moral issue: borrowers ought to repay their debts. Then there is concern about contagion: if one country did this, investors would fear others might copy; if creditors then panicked, that could tip yet more victims over the edge.

These would be fair points if the problems of emerging market debt could somehow be magicked away. But in the real world, there is something to be said for making creditors bear some of the pain. At least, they would then be less likely to repeat their mistakes, reducing the moral hazard problem. It might be tricky to secure investors' agreement to a moratorium, but in extreme one could be imposed.

A debt moratorium would hardly be a get-out-of-jail-free card. The countries concerned would still need to agree a policy programme and face stigma in financial markets. True, following an IMF-blessed moratorium, there would probably be investor jitters elsewhere. Yet, only countries with similar debt problems would face a real crisis, and the same mechanism could be used to rescue them.

None of this would be ideal. But the maths would add up. Investors would receive more of their money back than in a Russian or Indonesian-style meltdown, and as far as contagion is concerned, an orderly moratorium would surely be better than another disorderly collapse.

Financial Times Syndication

Hollow victory for the PLO

Andrew Gowers reviews Said Aburish's recent biography on Yasser Arafat

WHO IS the real Yasser Arafat, and how will history judge him? More than a few authors have attempted to answer one or both of these questions in recent years, with varying degrees of success. The customary answer is that he has been one of the stranger and more enduring phenomena in international affairs during the last third of the 20th century: a terrorist chief turned peace-maker, a man of immense resilience coupled with Protean political dexterity and a rare talent for publicity.

It is he, more than anyone else, who has ensured that the Palestinians have survived as a force to be reckoned with in the tortuous politics of the Arab Middle East. This is a formidable feat, given the ferocious odds stacked against his people since the foundation of the state of Israel 50 years ago.

Yet, as Palestinian writer Said Aburish points out in this thoughtfully written biography, there is a hollow aspect to Arafat's achievement which circumstances in the Palestinian entity that he now leads lay all too bare.

With the Middle East peace process at a dead end, his quest for an independent state in which to express the national aspirations he has embodied for more than 30 years looks increasingly forlorn. Instead, he presides over a nepotistic regime, complete with oppressive security forces, whose main purpose seems to be to keep them bottled up and quiescent in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. How has it come to this?

Aburish has two advantages over previous Arafat biographers, myself included. He has the benefit of their research, and good timing. His account of the Palestinian leader's career up to relatively recent times, plundered shamelessly from existing literature and augmented by disappointingly little original work. Of such real people as he did interview for the book, too many are other journalistic observers. He also overdoes his claims to being a unique Arab viewpoint to his subject, including the "native bazaar mentality [sic] which made him."

Fortunately, these deficiencies are offset by the book's perspective. For Arafat's health is failing. The Palestinian National Authority looks ominously like the final point of his career. It is possible now to make a measured judgment of his life.



There can be no disguising the inadequacies of what he has obtained. With Israel adamant in its refusal to make more than

minimal concessions, the Palestinian entity is a sorry shadow of a state: the authority itself a cross between an incompetent parish council and a tinpot Arab dictatorship.

Indeed, it bears a resemblance to the "Bantustans" or Indian reservations that Arafat has spent most of his life, and countless press interviews, denying that he would ever

accept as a home for his people. Contrary to the euphoria which surrounded the signing of the Oslo accords a few years ago, and subsequent Israeli-Palestinian co-operation, it certainly does not look at present like the nucleus of a stable Mid-East settlement.

Aburish's charge seems to be that Arafat could have done quite a bit better. The Palestin-

ian leader negotiated through secret Norwegian channels with the Israelis, and in the process fatally undermined official negotiations underway in Washington with delegates from the West Bank and Gaza. He was, argues Aburish, motivated in part by an egotistical fear of being eclipsed by other Palestinian leaders, and he was dealing from a position of weakness that was entirely self-inflicted.

Thanks to Arafat's blundering support for Saddam Hussein over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the Palestine Liberation Organization he had built up with Arab financial assistance and led for nearly three decades was bankrupt. Once he had opened his secret channel, says Aburish, the Israelis knew he was on the ropes and pressed their advantage.

There may be an element of sour fantasy in all this. Aburish certainly loses no opportunity to disparage the Israeli-Palestinian agreements, and Israeli motives in particular. It is far from clear that circumstances would have been different if Arafat had allowed negotiations to take their official course rather than opening the Oslo channel.

But it is plausible to argue that Arafat is at least in part responsible for his current plight. His strength, as Aburish says, is also his shortcoming: "the belief that he alone is capable of realizing Palestinian ambitions." His determination was manifest early on in the launch of a chaotic "armed struggle" against Israel, and in his far-sighted decision to seek an accommodation with the enemy. But the PLO under his command became a corrupt, sprawling and indolent bureaucracy with the sole purpose of self-perpetuation. The insecure Arafat, ever anxious to preserve his pre-eminence, surrounded himself with ill-educated, sycophantic advisers. He failed to create lasting institutions or pursue a coherent, properly planned course. In the end, he bears a sneaking resemblance to the tired and autocratic band of other Arab leaders—men he had always encouraged his people to despise. It is a sad verdict on a man who once promised them so much.

Financial Times Syndication

Scientific weather forecasting in the Middle Ages



Scientific Weather Forecasting in the Middle Ages: The Writings of Al Kindi, Studies, Editions and Translations by Gerrit Bos and Charles Burnett, London, Routledge, Kegan and Paul, September 1998, pp560, \$127.50.

MAN HAS always been concerned with the weather, and the effective ways of predicting it. Simple predictions from meteorological phenomena or from the constellations rising in the sky can be attributed to Aristotle, and in Varro, Pliny and the paraepigrams of the Ancient World.

However, the particular cultural situation of Baghdad in the mid-ninth century encouraged the production of what are perhaps the first comprehensive treatises on weather-forecasting that can be regarded as being based on scientific principles. These are two 'letters' of the 'Philosopher to the Arabs' Yacoub ibn Ishaq Al Kindi (ca 800-ca.870), who did so much to promote Greek science in the Arabic language.

Al Kindi combines at least three traditions: the weather-forecasting tradition of the learned astrological tradition represented by Al Kindi's predecessors Umar ibn Al Farrukhan and Masha'allah, and those deriving from Ptolemy and Greek sources including the Greek tradition of Pseudo-Aristotle and Prolemy.

Al Kindi sets these diverse traditions within the context of Aristotelian physics, developing the theory of the fifth essence from the De caelo and citing the Meteorology. Each of these two treatises begins with a detailed theoretical discourse; the first concerning cosmology, the second the order of

the sciences and roles of reason and experience.

This volume sketches the history of weather-forecasting from ancient times through to the Early Modern period, and places the two letters of Al Kindi within their historical context. It discusses the doctrine and the sources of the letters and compares their contents with that of other texts by Al Kindi concerning cosmology and the weather. Since the original Arabic text of Al Kindi's letters has not been discovered, the work is drawn from two quite literal Hebrew translations; one of which was made by the renowned mid-13th century translator Kalonymus b. Kalonymus and also from an independent Latin version, apparently made directly from the Arabic, in which the two letters have been combined into one treatise. The two Hebrew translations and the Latin version are edited, taking into account all the known manuscripts, and an annotated English translation of the Kalonymus text is included.

None of the major astrological texts on weather-forecasting in Arabic, Hebrew or Latin has been edited and now, for the first time, this has been written about, this book is a first study devoted exclusively to medieval weather-forecasting—a topic which, from the evidence of the number of texts and manuscripts, had a significant place in medieval scientific and social culture.

BOS is Professor of Jewish Studies at the Martin Buber Institute, Cologne, Germany. Charles Burnett is lecturer in the history of the Arabic/Islamic influence in Europe during the Middle Ages at the Warburg Institute, University of London.

Andrew Zawacki talks to American author Charles Johnson, whose new novel attempts to clarify the message of the black civil rights leader

NOVELIST CHARLES Johnson is best known as the only African American since Ralph Ellison to win the National Book Award. Thirty-eight years after the publication of Ellison's *Invisible Man* in 1952, Johnson's *Middle Passage* (1990) earned its author high praise from critics considering him an heir to Melville, Conrad and Swift as well as to Wright and Cleaver.

The civil rights activist Dr Martin Luther King Jr is the focus of *Dreamer*, Johnson's new novel, which is published next week in the UK. Set in Chicago during the last two years of King's life, *Dreamer* is a fictional account of King's encounter with his almost identical "double," Chaym Smith.

Johnson's preparation for the novel was intense: he spent two years after *Middle Passage* researching King's sermons and collected papers and he studied documentary footage of the civil rights movement in Chicago from 1966 through to King's assassination on April 4, 1968. "I needed to understand this man better, I felt, than I did," said Johnson in a recent interview, "so I read every scrap he managed to write from childhood onwards."

He emphasizes that it is not just about King. "It's also about doubles and the people who made possible the civil rights movement—black people prior to 1970 and going back to the period of reconstruction." But Johnson has not ignored Yeats's admonition, "In dreams begin responsibility." "I felt my primary responsibility," Johnson explains, "was to deliver, particularly for those born after 1970, a portrait of this man that was not the airbrushed, canonized figure that we have come to celebrate every January 15."

Particularly distressing to Johnson are the ways King's philosophy has been distorted. "After King's death, many people in America moved farther and farther away from his dream." In Washington state (where Johnson holds the Pollock chair in creative writing at the University of Washington), "we have a pro-gun group quoting King, who they say would see possession of firearms as a civil right. On the other end of the continuum we have Louis Farrakhan, who also feels free to quote King. My question is: what did this man actually say about various issues? A lot of that has been lost, as well as the scars and bruises of this remarkable man, who I think is one of the most important moral philosophers of the 20th century. I wanted to put those pores and

The philosopher King



Martin Luther King, making one of his speeches on equality

scars and that sweat back on his brow, particularly during the last two, very difficult years of his life."

Johnson finds it "compelling and interesting how few people across America knew this man. People know him as a civil rights leader, but they don't know him as a moral philosopher, as a man of

the spirit."

Apart from Johnson's mission to remind the world of King and his legacy, there was another factor which prompted the theme of the novel. "We began to hear in the 1980s and early '90s the tragic statistics about the situation of young black men in America," he says, noting that in

California, one in three black men between 16 and 34 are "controlled by that critical age group" in '80s. Johnson began wondering, "Didn't King address these matters?"

King, he concluded, is more relevant than ever. "He said we have to fight on two fronts. One is the external battle

against discrimination, injustice and segregation. The other is internal, it's looking inward, in terms of a constant, life-long effort for self-improvement and personal evolution, growth towards particular spiritual ideals. For King, you could not have success with one without having success with both."

Johnson considers himself a philosophical novelist rather than a writer of historical fiction. Asked if the relation between the metaphysical aspects of *Dreamer* and his specific political milieu had been a balancing act, he answers: "King is a philosopher, so he gives me access to a broad canvas, to important moral and ontological ideas that relate to politics. I think that it's all one whole. It is a balancing act, but politics is very much a part of our lives, and I find the political realm interesting when we respond to its complexity."

Johnson finds several of King's tenets "philosophically interesting." Firstly, "the idea that non-violence is not just a strategy on civil rights demonstrations, but intended originally to be a way of life. Secondly, why he spoke so often of agape, or unconditional love, and why that was so important in terms of mediating racial situations in America and preventing black-white conflicts from becoming a power struggle. Thirdly, his belief, right down to the very end of his life, in integration. The way he articulates that at times demonstrates how our lives, our language, the clothes we wear, the furniture of our world are already inherently integrated."

But American racial politics of the 1960s were, of course, bitterly defined by bifurcations. "The civil rights movement, ultimately," argues Johnson, "is about self and other. It's about black selves and white others, white selves and black others, and how we construct our identity." So it's no surprise that fictional doubles recur in Johnson's work. "Doubles occur a lot, because the twin is our mirror, because our identity is social, it's based on a 'we' relationship, so the other person understands something about me I can't."

The novel's conclusion alludes to Andrew Young's accusation that when King was shot, Jesse Jackson covered his palms with blood and then appeared bloodstained before the press. "I was haunted by the feeling," says the young narrator Matthew Bishop, "that this act of theatre and falsity, this photo-op, would define the spirit of black struggle for decades after the minister's demise." Asked whether this fear has been realised, Johnson looks to his exemplar: "I don't think in 30 years we've had a leader like Dr Martin Luther King, who was a leader for all Americans, black and white."

His last campaign was for poor Americans, blacks, Appalachians, Hispanics, Native Americans, everybody. I don't think we've had a leader who's spoken that way across racial divides, who has spoken so eloquently about the beloved community. I think that he was very special and that we've felt his absence as a kind of ache for 30 years now."



Anniversary of

German Unification

Hannover - Germany World's leading trade fair city

HANNOVER HAS an unbroken international tradition dating back to the time of the Welfs, one of Europe's oldest royal dynasties. The Hanoverians—and visitors to the city—enjoy an urban lifestyle with wide-ranging cultural attractions. The city is known throughout the world for its trade fairs as well as the upcoming World Exposition EXPO 2000. It is also the home of numerous well-known companies and scientific research organizations.

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The unique success story of Deutsche Messe AG began with the Hannover Export Fair in 1874. Since then, the fair has grown into a major road and rail routes, the Hannover trade fair centre offers presentation facilities that are second to none in terms of size and functionality. Over the years Hannover has developed into a central market and meeting place for millions of people in East and West.

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The Hannover trade fair centre at a glance
Total capacity: 1 million m²
26 halls: 455,000 m²
Open air site: 170,000 m²
Exhibitors: 28,000
Percentage of foreign exhibitors: 36%
Convention Center: 35 rooms and halls/seating capacity of 5,200
No. of events per year: 50+

Hannover Fair and Jordan
Jordanian businessmen have been visiting Hannover's different fairs since the early 1960's. Jordanian industrial firms and computer software programming firms began exhibiting in Hannover from the early 1990's.

German Ambassador in Amman Peter Mende

'The far-right does not play any role in Germany's policy'

EDITOR'S NOTE: On the eve of the German Unification Day, *The Star* talked to Mr. Peter Mende, the German Ambassador to Jordan. Mende is a veteran diplomat who served in the Kingdom in the early '70s. He discussed Jordan-German relations, economic relations, peace process, and German unification. Excerpts follow:

How do you evaluate Jordan-German relations?
As I used to state publicly, all the time, they are excellent. There is no problems, never in the past, and I don't expect any in the future. These relations are based on mutual interests, on economic interests, on a large number of Jordanians living in Germany, having their families still here in Jordan, and on Germans liking your country when visiting it.

Do you see any room for improvement especially in the economic field?

There is always room for improvement. Our trade with Jordan is going up, but German investment in your country is minimal. This should and could be changed.

Overall, how do you see



Mende

Germany's role in the Middle East?

Germany is not a major player in the Middle East as we all know. Germany, within the European Union, formulates EU policy on the Middle East. Bilaterally, Germany plays no strong role in the Middle East, except in the field of trade, and in the role of what I call human-social relations, like academia, scholarships, archaeological interests.

What is your opinion of the peace process?

The peace process started off in good spirits. Everybody was



optimistic that the difficulties in the region could find a solution. Unfortunately that optimism did not prevail. The peace process is today in a very serious state. I say this without blaming one or the other of the parties; Jordan is suffering because of the lack of progress, the active role of Europe is limited somehow by those who don't want Europe to play a more

active role and by those who are heavily involved in the negotiations process. But Europe nominated a special envoy, and it's willing to play a more active role.

What did the elections mean for Germany?

It is a normal democratic process. People were highly motivated in the extraordinary

high turnout. The majority of votes opted for a change in leadership. Now we get it. But the general direction of German foreign policy will not change.

Does the far-right movement signify anything if at all in terms of German policy?

First of all, it would be a question of definition of what is far-right. Second, Germany does not differ from other European states, with the fringe minority of the population who are dissatisfied with the main stream political parties. The far-right doesn't play any political role in Germany's policy.

How do you see the concept of German unity since the collapse of the German wall?

German unity is a fact. It is on the right track, it moved far ahead. Some people are dissatisfied that unity is not moving faster, but there was no other way to dissolve the separation of Europe which Germany was a part of. There is no regret but the discussion on how fast and by which means we could achieve final unity for all of us in Germany goes on.

What about German economic power and its future vis-a-vis Europe and the US?

Germany is a highly industrialized state with a very solid social structures and a population of roughly 80 million educated well trained people. This as such means strength and power. German policy has always been and will always be to balance our economic strength with those of our European neighbors, partners and friends. We are competitors with the United States in some fields, but we are also partners in many other fields.

Schroeder ends Kohl's longtime tenure as German Chancellor

By Carol J. William

BERLIN—Gerhard Schröder, the suave and media-savvy governor of Lower Saxony, ousted German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in a splintered federal election Sunday, sending Europe's longest-serving leader into retirement and ending an era that witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification.

The one clear message from the vote, that gave Schröder's Social Democratic Party a mandate to build a new government was that Germans wanted change after 16 years of Kohl, even if they remain uncertain how best to achieve it.

While Schröder's party and the environmentalist Greens appeared to have enough votes between them to hold a slim majority in the Bundestag, or Federal Assembly, strong showings by the liberal Free Democrats, who have been junior partners in Kohl's coalition, and by the former Communists of eastern Germany meant the opposition will be nearly equal in numbers.

In a dignified concession barely an hour after the polls closed, a weary Kohl, 68, congratulated his younger opponent and announced his resignation from the leadership of the Christian Democratic Union, which he has headed for a quarter of a century.

"This is a personal success for Gerhard Schröder, and I wish him a debt hand for the sake of our country," Kohl, poised and betraying little emotion, told supporters, who slipped dejectedly from champagne glasses that had been filled before results came in to CDU headquarters in Bonn.

With his party's meager 35 percent showing, the worst in its postwar history, Kohl became the first sitting chancellor to be voted out of office since the Federal Republic of Germany was founded in 1949 on the ruins of Nazism.

Schröder arrived at his party's packed nerve center to a press of well-wishers so overwhelming that they spilled onto

the capital's main drag, creating a giant street party and blocking traffic.

The 54-year-old son of a war widow who scrubbed floors to support her five children, Schröder paid his respects to Kohl before vowing to fulfill his campaign pledges to "fight the scourge of unemployment" while maintaining a stable economy and foreign policy.

"He was a tough opponent, but the voters have spoken about whom they want to lead our country into the future," Schröder told the jubilant crowd basking in the heat of thousands of television lights.

He promised to shepherd Germany through the tough challenges of the next four years, which will include European monetary union, a move from Bonn to this prewar capital and the expansion of NATO and the European Union.

While Schröder and his left-of-center Social Democrats won the right to open coalition talks with potential partners by virtue of their collecting 41 percent of the vote, the largest percentage, the shape and spirit of the post-Kohl leadership was far from clear.

The leftist Greens, who won a disappointing 6.5 percent of the vote, have been declaring themselves ready to compromise and cooperate with Schröder. But with only about an eight-seat majority in the 656-member Bundestag after redistribution of votes given to parties that failed to clear the 5 percent minimum, Schröder would have to worry about radical Greens' parliamentarians breaking ranks with the more moderate leadership to vote down legislation vital to reforming Germany's bloated social welfare system.

Schröder and Social Democratic leader Oskar Lafontaine



Schröder

wants to become vice-chancellor and foreign minister in return for providing the balance of parliament seats Schröder needs to have a majority.

Wolfgang Schäuble, Kohl's preference to succeed him as CDU leader, also seemed to rule out an alliance with the Social Democrats when he told ARD television that he considered a grand coalition "an emergency measure" to be employed only in the event no other partnerships are possible.

But the leader of the powerful Association of German Industry, Hans-Olaf Henkel, told the network a grand coalition "would be better for the economy and for jobs."

"The chancellor election isn't everything. If Schröder wants to push through new laws, he'll have to negotiate with us if he wants our support," warned PDS parliamentary leader Gregor Gysi. "For example, there will be no automatic yes for the next budget."

left open the option of talking with Kohl's CDU successors about a possible grand coalition—the "elephants' wedding" option that would draw the traditional adversaries of Christian and Social Democrats into a governing alliance.

Pre-election polls suggested that most Germans would prefer such a grand coalition to push through difficult belt-tightening, for which neither major party wants to take sole blame. That left-and-right-of-center union might also mute the strengthened voice of the ex-Communists, now called the Party of Democratic Socialism, who might otherwise find enough common ground with the Greens to undermine Schröder's reform objectives.

Western allies have also expressed wariness about a German government including the Greens, who were born of the strident anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and remain committed to shutting down nuclear power plants and demilitarizing NATO.

Greens leader Joschka Fischer, however, struck the pose of a partner in Schröder's victory, praising "our joint efforts" to bring an end to Kohl's right-of-center rule. Fischer has made clear that he

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REPRESENTATIVE IN JORDAN

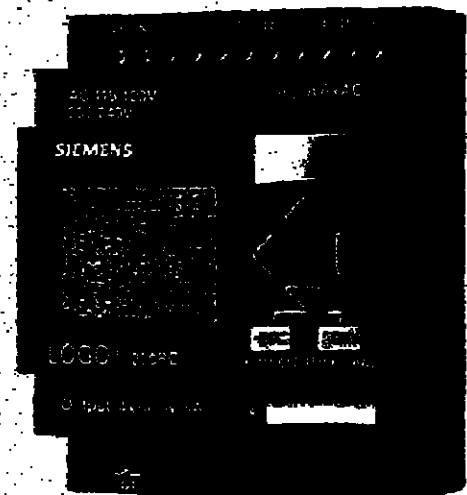
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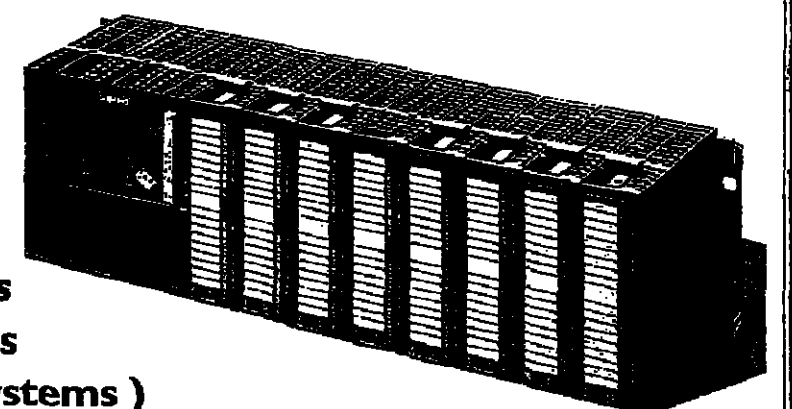
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Crusading on a wing and a prayer

Sassounian's homeland—a brutal-yet-beautiful region settled more than 3,000 years ago—desperately needs the help. In the space of a decade, Armenia has endured a devastating earthquake, the fall of the Soviet Union, deadly border conflicts and a punishing economic blockade by hostile neighbors.

By John M. Glionna

YEREVAN, Armenia—He is a most unlikely national hero, this foreign-born crusader dressed in wrinkled dress pants, Hush Puppies and an outmoded Member's Only jacket.

His eyes blinking against the light, Harut Sassounian walks tentatively down the steps of the US military's C-5 Galaxy cargo plane, the largest airborne transport vehicle on Earth. Once again, the 47-year-old Glendale, California, newspaper publisher has packed a mammoth plane with millions of dollars in aid collected from donors across the United States.

For Sassounian, this war-torn former Soviet republic is at once an exotic and heartbreaking place that has become the center of his cultural identity. Eight thousand miles from home, it is the road's end for all his energies, the coveted kingdom to which he returns again and again bearing the fruits of his emotional modern-day crusade.

This summer, for the 100th time in the last 10 years, Sassounian's Glendale-based United Armenian Fund arrived with an array of supplies aimed at jump-starting the economy and self-respect of this infant democracy. The private \$230 million airlift mission, bankrolled in major part by investor Kirk Kerkorian, has become the largest to any country since the United States government's historic Berlin airlift after World War II.

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In the space of a decade, Armenia has endured a devastating earthquake, the fall of the Soviet Union, deadly border conflicts and a punishing economic blockade by hostile neighbors.

On the Tarmac, Sassounian—a shy man still reticent despite numerous such encounters—steps into a pressing phalanx of reporters.

"What have you brought us?" one local journalist asks.

Sassounian, the United Armenian Fund's executive director, recites his \$8-million cargo of precious medical and technical supplies, explaining that a second, smaller plane will arrive the next day.

"All of it," he shouts over the roar of the plane's big engines in a fluent native tongue. "It is for our Armenia."

The tale of the 100th mission in Sassounian's crusade is as much the story of the 10 years and 99 often-mad and near-exhausting flights he organized before. The crusade is the litany of countless telephone calls, arm-twisting, all-night strategizing and near-begging that it takes to fill an airplane with donated supplies and safely guide it into the waiting arms of a needy people.

The crusade is savoring the satisfaction of opening the battered metal doors of yet another monstrous cargo jet, one with a belly large enough to swallow half a soccer field, and to see the fruits of your labors: computers, kerosene lanterns, pallets of syringes, antibiotics and textbooks, mammography machines, even entire hospital operating rooms.

Most of it has been given free of charge, not only by supportive groups but also some very profit-conscious hospitals and universities—all because Sassounian knew where to look and how to close the deal.

"Getting materials at the cheapest price is Harut's last resort," said a friend of Sassounian's. "His first priority is to convince companies to donate all they can and then pay the freight to have it

shipped."

If you're Harut Sassounian, the crusade's payoff comes when you arrive in the homeland. It's hearing the appreciative oohs and aahs of needy doctors and nurses who until now have watched helplessly as people die of curable disease and injury because there was not enough medicine. Or the exclamation of the school teachers who can't take their eyes from the textbooks, the new computers and building supplies you deliver, the ones who take your hand and cry as they thank you.

Sassounian's homeland is a place that until a few years ago often had no energy to run factories or pump water into homes because so much money was being used to fund the war against neighboring Azerbaijan. It is a place where until recently, you were issued a candle when checking into a hotel because the lights were out.

Each time he comes, Sassounian negotiates a drab-looking landscape of pollution, broken concrete, harsh edges and homely Soviet architecture. He is sometimes driven to distraction by a country where the statue of Lenin in Yerevan's main square was only recently dragged away—a place where the people still sing Russian songs, where the groups of humanitarian Sassounian leads are still tailed by grim government handlers, just like in the old days.

Through rigorous controls and detailed manifests that keep tabs on shipments, Sassounian has fiercely battled the legacy of Russian graft that threatens to suck the life from his crusade.

"I don't kid myself," he says. "I know that some supplies are diverted, maybe as much as 20 percent. I just hope that one day Armenians will discontinue that foolish holdover from the Soviet days

when people were proud to steal what they could from the government."

Before the earthquake, he had visited Armenia only once—as a tourist. His ancestors were driven from the homeland centuries before and Sassounian was born an exile in Syria. Only in the crusade has he found a way to go back home, to allow the lonesome Armenian landscape to cast a haunting shadow over his entire life.

"For us, Armenia is a dream, an ideology, a passion," he says. "Our homeland is the root of us all. Without it, we couldn't cling to our sense of heritage for very long. And so everything we do, it is for Armenia."

A tour bus rumbles slowly through the dusty, pot-holed streets of Gyumry, Armenia's second-largest city. Sassounian and his group of humanitarians, lobbyists and investors are beginning a four-day tour that will include a reception at the presidential palace and a visit to the national assembly.

But first, at Sassounian's insistence, they come to Gyumry, a depressed city of shattered concrete and kerosene-smoked skies that in many places looks as though the quake struck 10 days ago, not 10 years. While the government has built new apartments for an estimated 100,000 people, another 150,000 still live in substandard housing. The rebuilding, they complain, has come far too slowly.

"Ten years and nothing has changed," one woman weeps to the delegation. "They've done nothing. We live like dogs."

Said Sassounian: "That's why many government officials don't even come here anymore. They can't take the heat."

At a lunch, local officials congratulate themselves on their progress. But later, after Sassounian's bus leaves, the mood remains bleak. At a local church, the Rev. Parn Avedikian laments that people are still starving. He questions the nature of aid still concentrating on rebuilding schools and hospitals, not bringing food.

Inside one abandoned aid container, 40-year-old Melis Arakelian lives with his wife and five children. He once worked at the Soviet Union's largest forestry factory in Gyumry, one that was leveled in the quake. He hasn't worked since, existing on money sent by relatives in America.

He kisses his 10-year-old son on the cheek. "This is all I have," he says. "It is not easy to be an Armenian."

The 6.9 magnitude earthquake of 1988 changed Sassounian's life. He was no longer happy just to write a weekly column in his 2,500-circulation California Courier, often criticizing Soviet policies. He longed to do something. He knew part of the game. After coming to the United States in his teens, he had worked overseas in marketing for a large corporation. He knew, too, that Armenians were often their own worst enemy, a hopelessly fractured people with many factions battling for a political upper hand.

So after watching the angry breakup of several aid meetings in Los Angeles, Sassounian hatched his own plan: He asked Kerkorian, an Armenian American who'd made his fortune in airlines and hotels, to pay for an emergency cargo flight into Armenia. Kerkorian offered to provide \$100,000 for an airlift if other Armenians could fill the plane. The crusade was born, as Sassounian organized a coalition of seven groups, including Kerkorian's Lincy Foundation.

"All my friends laughed at me," he recalled as mission No. 100 flew over the Atlantic. "They said, 'Armenians haven't been able to agree on anything for thou-



A woman sweeps outside her Yerevan home

sands of years. How are you going to change that?"

He changed it on 2 December 1989, exactly one month after he pitched his idea to Kerkorian, when 25 tons of emergency aid left for Armenia aboard a rented Boeing 707. Immediately came talk of a second flight, then a third.

From his office in Glendale—home to many of Southern California's 300,000 Armenian Americans, the largest such community worldwide—Sassounian developed contacts with domestic aid groups and government officials on both sides of the Atlantic.

"I'm no longer just an observer," he remembers telling himself, on one of those first flights. "I was actually doing out, the real thing. Not sitting in a warm house in Glendale and writing a check. You handed out food and saw the thanks in people's eyes."

"They were crying. I was crying." Each trip seemed to hit a wall of Soviet bureaucracy. On the first flight, the Soviet government initially denied permission to land. But Sassounian says he went on packing the plane anyway, convincing a friend in the Soviet ministry who went to school with then-Communist leader Mikhail Gorbachev to intercede. "On the morning the plane was to leave, we got a telegram from Moscow containing just one word: 'Yes.' Nothing more," Sassounian said. "It was that close."

On another early flight, his cargo plane was forced to land in Soviet Georgia by a Russian Air Force jet pilot who Sassounian said threatened to shoot if they did not submit to an inspection.

Problems still persist. Sassounian, who frequently draws audiences with Armenian President Robert Kocharyan and other high-ranking ministry officials, recently prevailed upon Kocharyan to fire a high-ranking customs official he suspected of charging for bogus "lab" tests on shipments of towels and children's vitamins. Another time, a warehouse full of aid from a group other than Sassounian's also disappeared from a Yerevan airport hangar and was returned only after a ransom was paid.

In an interview at the presidential palace, Kocharyan said he was battling the

problem through reforms to the country's corrupt judicial system. "What kind of decisions are made by judges paid only \$25 a month?" he asked.

In Spitak, residents complain that little free medicine ever reaches them. High in the mountains, Spitak remains emotionally scarred by that December day when the earth was torn apart. To handle all the dead, the town's cemetery tripled in size. In the newer sections, the headstones, with their bas-relief portraits of the quake victims who lie beneath, lists only the birth dates. No one can forget the date of death. Hours after Sassounian's tour bus full of humanitarians has left Gyumry, Avetick Sarkisian, a local TV producer, watches a group of children play in the rubble of one of thousands of crumbled buildings.

"Look around," he says. "These children all go to school in tin shacks and they think it's normal to live in a city that's nothing but ruins. I'm an adult. I understand horrible things such as earthquakes. But they don't."

This is part of Sassounian's crusade, to show Armenians that life is more than poverty and devastation. In Yerevan, before leaving Armenia, he tours a Yerevan children's cardiac center his group has helped supply with modern equipment and medicine. In the last few years since receiving Sassounian's help, the center has successfully operated on more than 1,800 men, women and children.

Sassounian, a father of three, visits a 7-month-old girl with a congenital heart defect whose operation that morning couldn't have happened without supplies from the latest airlift.

He sits on the edge of her bed, disturbed by the sight of tubes running into her mouth, her tiny eyes blinking as he strokes her hand. Later, he holds a 10-month-old boy born sickly and blue-skinned. Now, after a recent heart operation, his face looks rosy and healthy.

Like Armenia itself, the child now has a chance at life. "What a boy," the crusader beams proudly. "What a beautiful boy."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



A young Armenian girl takes an early-morning nap at a food market in Yerevan while her parents eke out a living selling tomatoes.

The art of Rula Shukairy

Feelings, letters and paintings

INCISIVE CONSTRUCTION is introduced in feelings, letters, and paintings. Shukairy's paintings are personal letters to herself. I know nothing about Rula Shukairy personally, yet I can read into her art. In doing so, we are creating the world again. If we don't recreate what the artist has created, then that is grave embarrassment for the beholder. How you perceive her art depends very much on personal experience, on how you structure/define what the painter did. As read by us it is a structure in space—it is objective soft innospace.

Her paintings are non-representational, but still it can be read, and that depends on you, his, hers and my personal experience, demands, fusts, wishes and feelings, and on how we structure it. Her art is spiritual—a landscape of the soul. Yet it is busy with representations for whatever reason. That is how she gives meaning to structure and reality. Man-made work is often struck down as meaningless. But in Rula Shukairy's art, we discover, or detect ourselves in talking about it, in reading through the reality of our life, our feelings which are inside her paintings.

These working forms are naturally directed by us as structure and space. This inner space of hers becomes in her painting a real space. A real space which is objective, soft or perhaps even one which is taken away from her whole personality. Still we may never get it! Yet you see what you see. You define it with your fantasy, with your ability to recreate it into structure, sounds of music and rhythm. Her paintings are characterized with the

kind of openness in the surface of her paintings, in the space behind the different surfaces. As such, it makes people speak of their inner patterns, beliefs, demands, hates, lusts, obsessions.... It is those inner patterns that cause images to be read differently.

For we have always been trained everything that influences gives us our own pattern, and it is so that we relate to the outside world. The frame and the glass and the matting (the reality which we are part of) make the work inside more important as it is an abstract from us. For after all, all good art is abstract, because art abstracts from reality, it crystallizes facets and collects them into one line.

What the artist did is give a perfect structure through a surface, which you define, following your ideas about it, about whatever, about art, space, life etc.... Her wonderful structure and her killing of regularity leads to the destruction in her paintings. Through her art, it is easy to say that someone, somewhere is searching for the truth. If the whole truth is not found, then at least we find pieces, reflections or images of it. She has fantasy and ability to create/structure her paintings into rhythm, music and feeling, all structured by patterns related to the outside world. It is precisely this relation that has come between body language and art.

With China ink and Acrylic, she uses the most raw materials anyone could use and create with such feeling. So, impossibly, Shukairy chose very dangerous means that can turn into beautiful transparent surface colors, although Acrylics are known for great body and structure. The China ink

she uses gives more volume to the structure. Without doubt, her technique is the most advanced. In her art we found three levels; the shore, the blue sea, and the high sky. Seen from the back, it gives the beholder a chance to go in and identify. But at the same time, Shukairy achieves color interference with no divisions. Her colors are never objective because life is never objective. With such strong means, she produces innovation to trap....

Narrowness and darkness are the secret of her art. It is thus evident that the artist relates opposite forces (narrowness and darkness) with opposite forces to each other (space and light) to achieve unity. That is when her inner visions/pattern comes out. For inner vision is the subject matter, even if it is not horizontal. And a real artist creates from in side. What use is there in copying!!

The main message in her paintings as I see it, is that she gives us a chance to learn that we are dealing with the most important thing in life—light. Very few painters are able to paint light. And Shukairy's paper takes light in itself and radiates it outside. The physical and emotional appearance of light transcends in radiation, into the outside. Yes, the material i.e. canvass, is there, but it is only there as a means for radiating the light, after the light has sunk into it. The light is incorporated on surface, depth, structure, and emotional quality of colors, all of which contribute to meaning. This collection of light on such commonly used material, is most stimulating but is nevertheless the most difficult task, and Shukairy has achieved this.

This is her concentration of the ousted world through her personal screen, for we understand the world through a screen of ourselves, and we understand ourselves through the screen of the world. Shukairy's inner vision are at first, stored for days, months, even years. Then it is painted and given to the world.

A great strength lies within her paintings: objectivity, her paintings, as tempting as they may well be, are not a window into ambition, or even the real world. When we look at her art, we create it again; otherwise good art is worthless. Her art keeps objectiveness of the surface as is, it does not pretend to open a window of reality, because such a window is dangerous in that it spoils the world, because the mystery would get lost. And because it is objective, we can relate to it—for it shows us, the good with the bad. This is only made possible because she chose means, which can turn into nice beautiful surface color, and transparency like a veil of silk.

I find Rula Shukairy's art very stimulating, myself being one who has been living in the art world for so long, and yet her art does not remind me of anything I'd seen before. She has produced innovation, a new art. She has proven to us that art can only be art if it creates a new feeling.■

A commentary by Hans Peter, an art critic and a former curator of the Dusseldorf Museum in Germany.



The Korean Folklore Dance Group A fine symbol of a Far East culture

By Ghassan Joha
Special to The Star

Jordanians were introduced to the full throttle of Korean culture at the Prince Hassan Auditorium in the University of Jordan earlier this week. The scintillating delight of the east was given by the Korean Folklore Group.

The troupe, which came to Jordan from Baghdad, performed to a delighted audience that included secretary general of the Ministry of Culture Mahmoud Fadel Al Tal, who was deputizing for Minister Tala Al Hassan, and the Korean Ambassador Mr. Lee Kyung-woo.

A total of seven dances and musical performances were presented during the night, which began with a speech delivered by the Ambassador to the Jordanian people.

He praised the move made by the Ministry of Culture to spot the awareness of people to one of the most richest cultures of the Far East. "Culture and art are fundamental," stressed the Ambassador, "they can both bring people closer to each other." He said that this step strengthens the relationships between the two cultures, and shows the different styles of the dancing art of Korea, which is gaining a global appreciation among other cultures of the Far East.

The evening began with the vigorous sounds of hourglass drums. The tempo of the beat filled the stage with artistic vibrations. The "Samdo Seoul" Changgu depicts the exciting rhythms of hourglass drums played and carried by the dancers on their shoulders.

It enthused zest in the audience. The dance, which came from the Korean Samdo country, blends the Kyung Sangdo, Jeul-lado, Choonchungdo and Kyungkido rhythms, with four young people fiercely beating on the drums.

The next dance was "Wha-Kwan Mu", where the peace of nation is prayed for. Using the "Hansam", or the long sleeves attached to the wrists, the dance is per-

formed as a ritual, which has rigid rules of movement. The long colorful sleeves portray the sense of rhythm and flavor of the Korean people as well as the magnitude of dancing.

The "Glorious Dance", which is performed to exorcise evil spirits or drive out calamities is locally known as "Sanjo" or

their shoulders. The group, however, displayed a variety of dance techniques. The male drum performer of Changgu, wearing an hourglass drum, gives a thundering act.

Continuing the mood, is "Samul Nori", the Percussion Quartet. It is a modern chamber adaptation of the farmers' dance and music, which used to be performed outdoors.

This piece of music is especially played by four percussion instruments, named as Kwanggwari (small gong), Ching (large gong), Changgu (hourglass drum) and Puk (drum).

The dance is a lively and vibrant percussioned ensemble, which clearly displayed the vivid rhythms led by the players' enthusiasm and the harmonious arrangement of the four instruments.

However, the next "Puchaeum"—Fan Dance—is widely regarded as the most unique Korean traditional dance, that originates from the folkloric Shaman fan (a colorful middle-sized device played by hand and shaped like a segment of a circle).

Both the luxurious dresses and fans are used to perform this splendid dance to convey the glory of the universe and its divine rhythm. The last dance was an unusual one. The "Nong Ark" is a kind of modern reconstructed work of the traditional performing arts of Korea, which used to be performed by the farmers in the ancient era of agriculture. In this artistic performance, dancers expressed their thanks to the Heavens for making the harvest abundant.

The merry music, along with the elegant dances, strengthen the reconciliation and unity, peace and safety among the Korean people. Just before closing the curtains, Mr. Al Tal praised the group with flowers and exchanged handshakes on the stage, along with the Korean Ambassador.



"Pchum". The performer, clad in a white robe and scarf, hypnotized the audience with the slow rhythms of the "Sanjo", by creating more beautiful movements as the tempo of the hourglass drum "Changgu" gradually increased. With hems of skirts tied to their waists, beautiful maidens danced to the exciting rhythms of hourglass drums played and carried on

The people of Korea

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE indicates that the Korean Peninsula was inhabited by lower palaeolithic people at least as early as 500,000 B.C. Many archaeological sites, mostly located along rivers, have been excavated. The most famous are Sokchang-ri in Ch'ungch'ongnam-do province and Chongok-ri in Kyonggi-do province. Various stone tools, including hand-axes and chopper-scrapers, have been found at the sites, leading archaeologists to believe that their inhabitants engaged in hunting and fishing. These people are thought to have dwelt in caves, as the bones of many extinct animals and relics of their daily life have been unearthed in such places. The supposed connection between these palaeolithic people and today's Koreans is blurred at present by the lack of sufficient archaeological excavations and anthropological evidence.

It is the latecomers of neolithic culture that scholars generally agree are the direct ancestors of today's Koreans. According to anthropological and linguistic studies, as well as legendary sources, Koreans trace their ethnic origins from those who lived in and around the Altai mountains in Central Asia. Several thousand years ago, these people began to migrate eastward until they finally settled in an area including Manchuria and the Korean Peninsula.

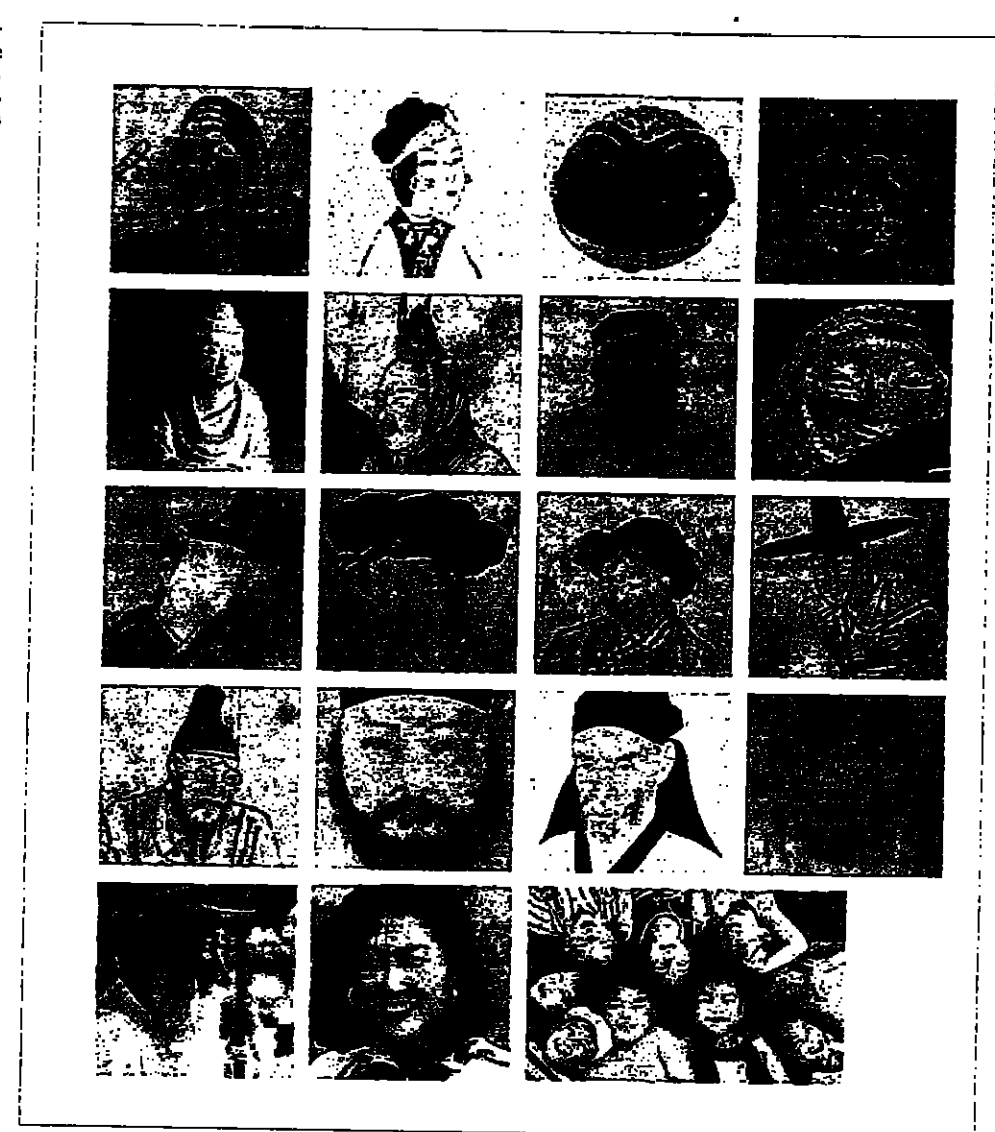
When these migrants entered the Korean Peninsula around the third millennium B.C., they were confronted by natives called Paleosians, who were eventually driven into various areas outside the Korean Peninsula. The Ainu of the northern tip of Japan, the natives of Sakhalin and the Eskimos of the eastern coast of Siberia are all descendants of these Paleosian tribes.

Uncovered two different types of pottery of this period, which raises the possibility that there were people of two different cultural ages.

The two types are comb pattern pottery of a Neolithic Age people and plain pottery of a Bronze Age people. The patterned pottery, believed to be the product of a food-gathering, hunting and fishing people, has been discovered near riverbanks and along the seashore, while the plain pottery, believed to have come from a food-producing people, has been unearthed mostly in the hilly regions of the country. Although these two people appear to have possessed different technologies, they shared the same culture, distinct from the Han Chinese.

As noted, most of the natives were subsequently driven north to Sakhalin, Kamchatka, and to the Arctic region by these newcomers, while a few were assimilated. Some of the migrants continued to move and eventually reached the southwestern shores of Japan. Therefore, there are cultural similarities in terms of beliefs, for example: shamanism, myths, and customs, as well as physical similarities among the ancient Koreans, Japanese and Siberian Eskimos.

Agriculture was introduced during the Bronze Age, which began around the 15th century B.C. Increased food produc-



tion and population growth led to social differentiation based on an unequal access to economic resources on the one hand, and clan or kin group formations on the other. Tribal societies of various sizes were established on the basis of clan relations, and some established chiefdoms and mini-states competing with each other. At the same time, people continued to migrate to Japan. Possessing more advanced civilization and culture, these migrants enjoyed ruling class status and even established their own small states.

The southwestern part of Japan, in particular, offered easy access to culture from the Korean Peninsula. This region provides ample archaeological evidence of significant cultural and ethnic relations with Korea. More archaeological study is required to draw an exact map showing how widely Koreans were dispersed during this period. Based on Chinese records and archaeological reports, however, it is assumed that they were living not only on the Korean Peninsula but also in the vast area of Manchuria and even the region north of the Yellow River in today's People's Republic of China.

Cultural contact with the Chinese also was significant. Around the fourth century B.C., iron making was introduced through contact with the Chinese. Inter-tribal competition as well as inter-ethnic contact with the Chinese became more frequent. The numerous Korean mini-states and tribal groups were integrated into several leading states, and resisted the military expansion of the Chinese. A strong sense of ethnic identity

and cultural distinctiveness enabled them to remain ethnically and culturally different from the Chinese.

As the ancient history of Korea shows, various small states were composed of dialectal groups within the Altaic language family. In the latter half of the seventh century A.D., these early states were unified in the Shilla kingdom, a significant event because this political unity was to consolidate the homogeneity of the Korean people, speaking one language and sharing the same culture.

However, the northern half of the Korean Peninsula and the whole of Manchuria, which had been the territory of another state called Koguryo, came under the reign of a new state called Parhae, established by a refugee group from defeated Koguryo. This state was highly heterogeneous both in ethnicity and in culture. The ruling class was composed exclusively of Koreans, while the general public was made up of various non-Korean local ethnic groups including the Manchurian Tungus. The ruling Koreans failed to incorporate the non-Koreans, and as a result, their state was challenged and gave way to the largest of the native ethnic groups. From that time, Manchuria was inhabited by various groups of Tungusic people.

While there was a considerable mixing of races among the various peoples in Manchuria, the inhabitants of the Korean Peninsula maintained their ethnic identity with only minimal mixing with external groups. Although cultural contacts were extensive between Korea and China from the early stages of their history, ethnic assimilation did not occur. Koreans

were (and still are) highly conscious of ethnic differences and cultural distinctions, which meant keeping their identity despite relations with China and Japan. Koreans exported their own culture and transmitted Chinese culture to Japan from ancient times, but they did not attempt any ethnic mixing with the Japanese. Many ethnic groups in Manchuria lost most of their ethnic identity and were even completely assimilated with dominant groups, but Koreans kept their ethnic identity and culture intact.

It is reported that approximately half a million Koreans live in Central Asia while more than two million Koreans reside in the vast areas of Manchuria, and that they have maintained their ethnic as well as cultural identity. Although they are minorities in their respective lands, they use their own language and letters and maintain traditional Korean social institutions and life styles. At the same time, they prefer ethnic endogamy so that retention of their own physical distinctiveness as well as cultural traditions is ensured.

According to a 1986 study by the Korean Institute of Science and Technology, the average height of a modern Korean is 167.7cm for men and 155.5 cm for women. In terms of height, this means that Korean males belong to the upper middle scale and Korean females to the medium scale, compared to other Asian people. The most distinctive physical features are almond-shaped eyes, black hair and relatively high cheek bones. It may also be noted that all Korean babies are born with blue spots on the lower part of the back, which is typical of Mongolians.

Seoul: A historic walled city

ESTABLISHED A hundred years before Columbus discovered the Americas, Seoul, the Korean capital, is an ancient city by New World standards. But compared with the antiquity of Korean history, Seoul is a relatively young.

Once the seat of kings, Seoul now is the hub of the entire nation, with a population of more than 10 million. Its rich ancient culture is readily accessible to visitors. Seoul has been the center of educational opportunities, professional training and leadership in Korea. Living in Seoul still engenders personal prestige, and so, throughout the centuries, young and old have converged on the city, taking part in a historical drama staged since the 15th century.

Into Seoul's rich history, a heritage has been woven which is evidenced by palaces, shrines, and monuments found over the city. For both the serious student of Korean history and the casual sightseer, Seoul holds a wealth of lore about Korea and its people. There are few cities in the world where the ultra-modern and the ancient exist side by side in such perfect harmony.

Today, Seoul is a teeming metropolis with many first-class Western-style hotels. English is spoken at many shops, bars, and restaurants. Just a few steps from many hotels is the center of the city is Toksong Palace, which is now a public park. Its ancient tile-roofed throne hall and annex buildings, where the king once received foreign envoys, and two stately Greco-Roman-style buildings are nestled in the shadows of new high-rise office buildings, a perfect example of Seoul's unique blend of old and new.

In the National Museum, located in front of Kyongbokkung Palace, the visitor can see priceless treasures of Korea's antiquity. Not far away in Ch'angdokkung Palace, where the kings and their families once lived. Adjacent to Ch'angdokkung Palace is Piwon, the Secret Garden, a lovely expanse of intertwining paths flanking wooded slopes, lotus ponds, and pavilions.

Just east of the Secret Garden is Ch'anggyongkung Palace, a detached palace in ancient times. It was transformed into an amusement park in the early part of the 1900s, but it has been restored.

Seoul hosts a variety of symphony concerts, operas, and recitals by local and visiting



A general view of Seoul, the capital city of Korea

musicians. The Seoul Arts Center in the southern part of Seoul, the Sejong Cultural Center, located on the main thoroughfare in downtown Seoul, the National Theatre in Namsan Park, and the Hoam Art Hall near the City Hall offer a wide range of cultural programs and performances.

Korea House, located near the center of the city, is an old-style Korean mansion which provides further insight into Korean traditions and customs. Expertly prepared Korean-style meals are available, as are programs of folk music and dance. A visit to Korea House is especially worthwhile for those with only a little time to spare.

The Palaces and Seoul's Heritage

Much of Seoul's special lure and charm centers on its palaces, which represent a colorful history of more than 500 years.

For the average tourist on a tight schedule, a half-day visit to one of the palaces can be highly rewarding. The palaces are the most obvious sightseeing attractions in the capital, and all are conveniently located near the downtown area. For a brief moment, a visitor may catch glimpses of Korea's heritage from the worn stone-paved paths, intricately patterned murals, and the clay figures which sit on roof ridges in eternal vigilance, warding off evil.

Palaces

Kyongbokkung Palace, located at the north end of Sejongno Street, was first built in 1394, the third year of the Choson Dynasty. It was burned during the Japanese invasion of 1592, and left in ruins until it was rebuilt in 1668. It is located in a 40 acre complex and is comprised of a number of large, impressive buildings. Kamjong-

jon, the largest palace building, served as the throne chamber and audience hall. Kyonghoeru, a spacious, two-story pavilion that seems to float in a man-made pond, served as a banquet hall for royal ministers and diplomatic delegations. Hyangwonjong, nestled in the center of a lotus pond, was the place where royal family members enjoyed private occasions. Many of the country's historic stone pagodas and monuments are displayed in various parts of the complex.

Also within the walled grounds and of interest to many visitors are the National Museum of Korea and the National Folklore Museum. A short distance away is Ch'angdokkung Palace, another favorite tourist spot. Its main gate, Tonhwangmun, is considered possibly the oldest gate in the capital city. It escaped the flames when major portions of the palace were burned during the Japanese invasion of 1592. Rebuilt in 1611, the palace was used as the official royal residence until 1910. To the present day, Naksonjae, a villa located on the palace grounds, serves as a residence for remaining members of the royal family. Piwon, the Secret Garden, also is a part of Ch'angdokkung. A serene woodland covering 78 acres, it was reserved during the Choson Dynasty for members of the royal family and palace women. It now is open to the public, but only through small, guided tours.

Just to the east of the Secret Garden is Ch'anggyongkung Palace, where visitors can get some idea of the way of life of the ancient royal family. In the restored palace complex, are found well preserved gates and arched bridges from that earlier era. The king conducted affairs of state in a stone courtyard adjacent to the main halls of the

palace. Behind the halls are the living quarters for the royal family.

Located across a broad traffic circle from City Hall is Toksong Palace, a compound housing traditional Choson Dynasty buildings and some impressive Western-style structures. They include Ch'ungwajon, the throne room or audience hall, and Sokchojon, a Renaissance style building that was the first of its kind in Korea. It was in this palace that the Choson Dynasty, which ruled Korea for more than 500 years, drew to a tragic end when Japanese domination brought annexation of the peninsula in 1910. Toksong Palace originally was built as a royal villa to appease a grandson of Sejo, the seventh ruler of Choson, who was passed over twice for the throne.


The "Stone Palace," was built at the turn of the century according to a blueprint drafted by a British architect.

In a secluded garden in the heart of Seoul is found Chongmyo, a shrine housing ancestral tablets of Choson Dynasty kings and their queens. On the first Sunday in May, the courtyards and shrine buildings are used for an annual Confucian ceremonial rite that is open to the public. The presentation is enacted by descendants of the royal Yi clan to keep alive the customs and traditions of that period.

Although not a palace site, also of interest in the center of Seoul is Tapgol(Pagoda) Park, a landmark in the struggle against Japanese colonial rule. It was in this park that the March First Independent Movement of 1919 was launched, a nationwide protest against Japanese domination. Brass plaques along the east side of the park tell the story of the movement and its suppression.

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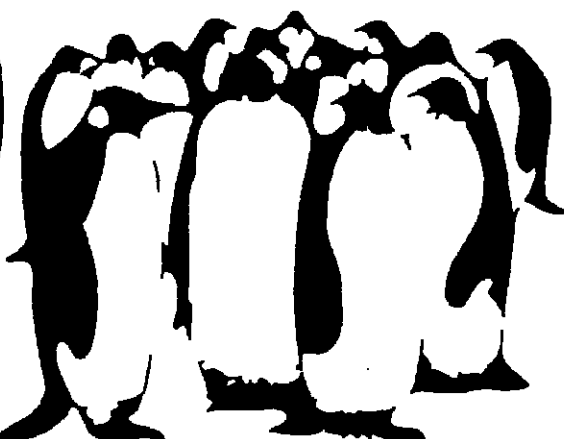
Congratulates the Korean people on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of South Korea



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AROUND TOWN



Inter.Con joins the 'World Clean Up 98'

IN KEEPING with InterContinental's world-wide commitment to the protection of the environment, Hotel InterContinental, Jordan, joined the Earth's largest community organized environmental event, the 'World Clean Up 98.' Hotel staff members participated in the World Clean Up 98 day organized locally by the Jordan Environment Society, and cleaned the Naour suburb of Amman, roads leading to the Dead Sea and the area around the factories situated along the main highway between Naour and the Dead Sea.

Hotel InterContinental joined hands with several community establishments, schools, universities and governmental bodies in a unified effort to draw the public's attention to the importance of preserving the environment.



SCRAPBOOK

Blasphemy on the Silver Screen

By Rasheed Al Roussan
Special to The Star

IN A split second, the lights flicker off and the hall goes pitch black.

Suddenly, the hypnotizing screen opens, and your blood pressure shoots up. Your brain can't bare the sizzling heat inside your lungs, and your veins melt during an endless trial of horrifying scenes.

Afterwards, the lights are turned on, and you try to figure out what happened. "A dream perhaps, or a blackout." Suddenly, your eyes blink, your brain starts to function again, and your heart-rate becomes normal.

This is the priceless thrill of movie animation, the art of virtual reality. The moment the screen opens, you become mesmerized. *Armageddon*, a movie that is one of a kind, is one of the outstanding animated films ever made. You won't find monsters, serial killers or psychos. This time you'll be staring at a different kind of murderer: an asteroid, that is about to become the unexpected guest of Planet Earth.

Directed by Michael Bay, the film presents one of the ongoing debates of this century: the impact of falling debris on earth. Geologists and NASA scientists have taken a great deal of interest in asteroids that have crashed down on earth.

Scientific evidence proved that the earth was subjected to different environmental impacts. One of these were the extinction of dinosaurs because the earth was struck by a meteor, creating crater that can still be seen in Mexico. The impact went far beyond to North America with an estimated diameter of 200 Km.

The impact didn't only destroy life on earth then, but created long-term dangers for life today. Water vapor, oceans chlorine, and nitrogen from the air resulted in acid rain. The crater is only a sample. Ceres, an asteroid with a diameter of 1030 Km is the largest. Next to this are Pallas and Vesta, with diameters of about 550 Km.

Due to global warming, pollution, and holes in the Ozone, many say that the end of the earth is at hand. Asteroids and comets are other new enemies.

We could soon be hosting a titanic asteroid coming towards us, eating up everything in its way. A farfetched notion? For Hollywood, it is a dream come true.

Armageddon has had a great impact. The word is described in the Bible as the end of the world. *Armageddon* is the name of a battlefield, that will witness the final fight between good and evil. The Bible states that all armies of the world will gather in Palestine, on a mountain called Megiddo. There, the wrath of God will destroy the whole universe, marking the Day of Judgment.

However, judgment day for Michael Bay is different. The magnitude of the visual effects is so powerful that one is withdrawn to a world of animated nightmares: beyond the wildest imagination. Parts of asteroids thunder down to earth sweeping the entire city of Paris, New York and Hong Kong, using the latest gadgetry in computer technology.

Animators turned the film into a sophisticated stage set where the sky comes down as hellish rocks. The incredible visual effects of huge man-made asteroids transformed the cinema screen into a real life drama. The audiences were gripped by the sound techniques, and the special thumping music.

Bruce Willis, acting as the head manager of a crack team of oil drillers, is appointed by the US government to save the planet from the danger of a killer asteroid. As people expect, the mission succeeds, but with several casualties. One gets the feeling in the end that the multi-million dollar production was about America saving the world, though this time, by emancipating humanity from a Biblical prophecy.

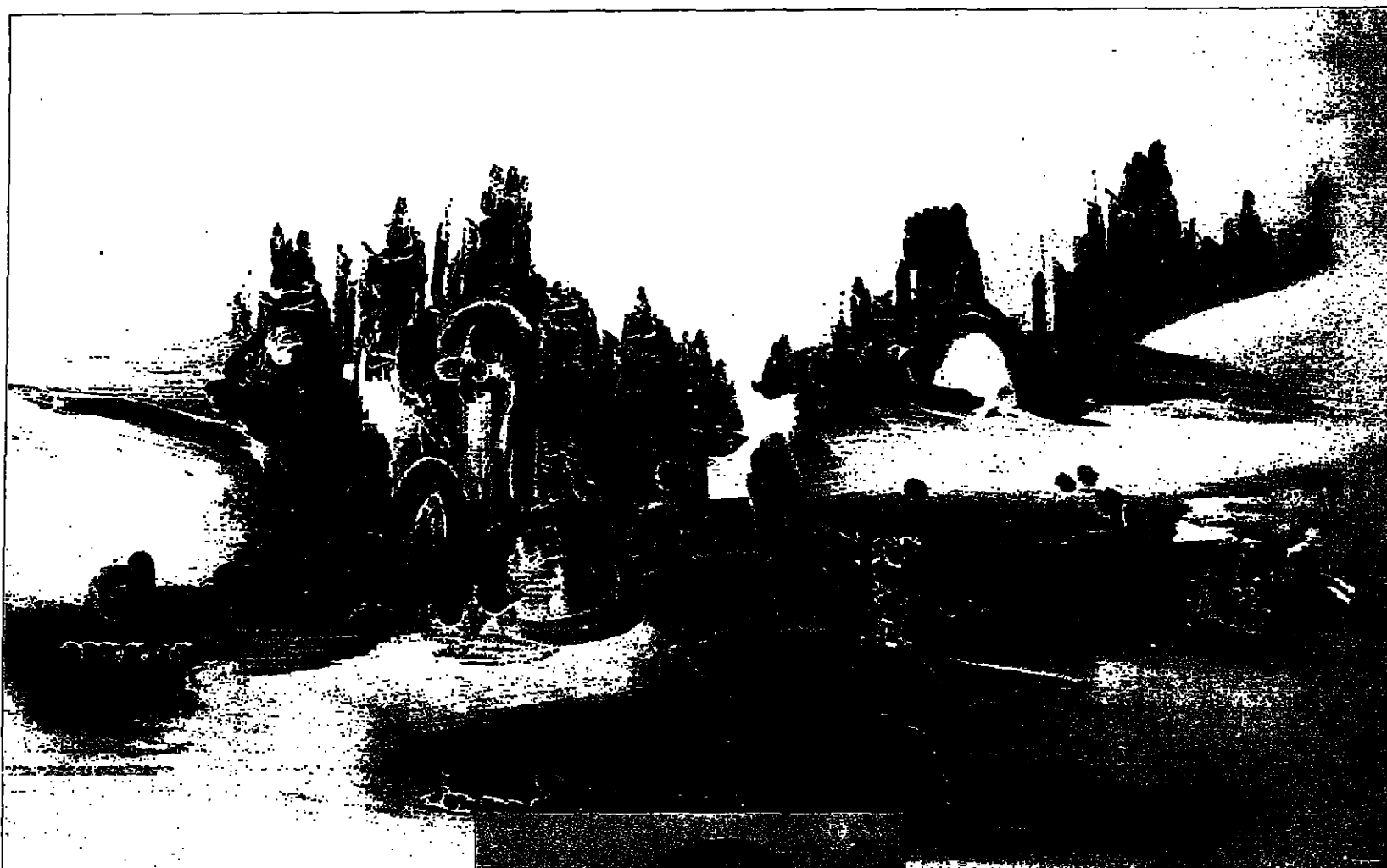
The US media has been keen to portray America as the world's savior. Everybody remembers Roland Emmerich's film *Independence Day*, the alien invasion of the world. As usual, the US army succeeds again in protecting humanity from alien tyranny. David, a Jewish American scientist, is the unsung hero of the film. He saves the world from a global war, and they live peacefully ever after!

Armageddon is not an exception. Movies of this kind are made to show people that nothing can stand against the world's most powerful nation, not even God himself!

Movie blasphemy is taking a new step towards advocating political stands, where saving the world from disasters has become one of the emblems of the US national charisma.

Close your eyes now, and try to imagine a large asteroid heading towards your land. If you need help, just dial NASA's phone number, and I am sure they will send someone there to save you.

The romantic realm of Polis on canvas



By Kofi Attah
Special to The Star

THE BEAUTY of any piece of art is usually dictated by the artist's inspirations, and by how he views the world around him. This is especially true for Mohammed Abdul Rahman Polis from Bethlehem—the city of love and peace—who has been painting and exhibiting his works since 1971.

His early works brought together nature, his childhood and his Arab surroundings and heritage; the many blazing colors brought these subjects to life. Later, his works explored the beauty of the woman, as well as Islamic decorations and patterns. The conduct of the world and how people treated each other, were other constant themes.

Polis' paintings are all highly personal. Born in Bethlehem, with mixed Jordanian and Palestinian roots, his paintings reflect the geographical shifts of the region.

The 35 paintings currently on display at the Amman City Hall aptly depicts the artist's inspirations, his fleeting memories of childhood, and his deep observation of nature. "I paint according to the musical heartbeats of the woman," Polis disclosed, whose paintings are ignited by the body movements of women in every form.

In one painting, 'Desire,' he uses the eye, the most communicative organ in the body to diffuse his message and to confirm his remarkable admiration of the woman. 'Desire' depicts a man and a woman in a setting that communicates a feeling of mutual love. This emotion radiates even stronger through his other work entitled 'Blue Night.' "I am strange. I like to be different from others; everybody is talking about an ordinary night, whilst I see a blue night," he declared.



Polis

In 'Blue Night,' he uses deep and light blue colors to paint a group of women clustered around in the sitting position, and exposes the natural qualities of gentleness and tenderness among all women. The artist testifies to these qualities. "The woman is soft, tender and loving, and everything else you can think of that is good."

Although the woman forms the subject of most of his enterprises, he also likes to link social events with romance. In his painting titled 'The

Gate of Amman,' he used his fingernails to enhance the image of Amman—the large gate, and the smaller ones surrounding it, represent the love of the city and its people. He tries to stimulate the visitor to share the anxiety and aspirations of the people living within the gate.

His oil paintings surprise audiences, by deviating sharply from his romantic theme to architecture. In the painting at the entrance of the Exhibition Hall, he welcomes the visitor with an old Arabic architectural design. The painting indicates his Arab background and cultural heritage, seen through the eye of a child in an Arabic and Islamic environment.

Nature and heritage has always intrigued him, even when he was young. He likes to delve deep into these subjects, using colors that set off every emotion. He demonstrates this in the work named 'Strange Dream,' which is full of evocative blues and whites, and evokes nightmares, and the bizarre world around us. Dreams are effective form of narrative, that embrace all time periods, and enact the human mind's transition from illusion to realism; from the past to the present, and then to the future. Dreams reveal his inner visions. 'Strange Dream' gives the visitor a sense of encouragement and hope. Mohammed Polis is creating a new mythology of his own and is paving the way for future Arab artists through illusions and realities. He is a romantic, an observer of nature, and at times a dreamer.

The exhibition proves that the artist has skill and versatility in abundance, and the works of Mohammed Polis can be seen in Hall 2 at the Amman City Hall, Ras Al Ain, until 3 October.

Peace press trip to Jordan goes smoothly

A PEACE trip to Jordan has been organized by British Airways and British Mediterranean Airways in order to promote Jordan in the tourist market. Twelve journalists representing internationally acclaimed publications like *The Times*, *The Boston Herald*, *Travel Weekly*, and the *Chicago Tribune*, will be accompanied by Mr Des Hetherington, Chief Executive, British Mediterranean Airways.

Mr Hetherington said, "We hope that this trip will enhance Jordan's standing on the international tourist map." He added that "these events show our commitment to promoting leisure travel to our destinations in the area."

The four-day trip will consist of an extensive sightseeing tour of Jordan's most popular archaeological sites. Starting from the Dead Sea location of Jesus' baptism, and will be followed by a visit to the town of Madaba where exquisite Byzantine mosaics were uncovered in the late 19th Century—including the famous 6th Century map of Palestine.

After a traditional lunch at Haret Joudouna in Madaba, the group will

depart for Mount Nebo—a peak claimed to be the site of the tomb of Moses, which descends 1500 meters into the Wadi Al-Mujib Canyon towards Karak.

Upon arrival in Petra, the group will ride a camel or horse as far as the Siq entrance, then walk the 1km long Siq to Al Khazneh (the Treasury).

A climb to the High Place of Sacrifice follows, where the views of the city to the west and Wadi Musa to the east are breathtaking. They will then continue on to Qasr Al Bint before ascending to Al Deir, a monastery dating from the 3rd Century BC.

The group will get to experience the true Bedouin lifestyle by camping in the Wadi Rum desert, where the spectacular scenery was featured in the film 'Lawrence of Arabia.' sip Bedouin tea and sleep beneath the stars. The group will then head out to Aqaba, Jordan's aquatic playground for some scuba diving, snorkeling, and water sports.

A farewell dinner will be held on the final day, hosted by the Jordanian Minister for Tourism Mr Aqel



Biltaji.

"Like the Concorde trip earlier this month, this trip is designed to show the world what British Airways already knows—Jordan is a spectacular tourist destination," said Mark Hodson, BA manager, Jordan. "I'm looking forward to welcoming these

journalists and then receiving their rave reviews." Finally, Mr Hetherington extended his appreciation to Mr Seif Saudi, managing partner of Jordan Eco-Tours, and Mr Elias Khazooz, Tour Guide, for their warm welcome and assistance.

AGENDA

Exhibitions

■ Paintings by 18 artists from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon at the Al Mashriq Gallery, Shmashani. It continues until 1 November.

■ The Solidarity exhibition by Palestinian artist Makhoul and Indian painter Alnoor Mitha continues at the National Gallery of Fine Arts until 3 October.

■ A joint exhibition for Arab artists continues at the Hamorabi Gallery until 15 October.

■ More than 120 works of Jordanian and Arab artists are currently on display at the Fakhir Al Nisa Zeid Gallery in the Ministry of Culture.

■ An exhibition by Lamia Jamal of her sculptural artworks opens on the 7 October at the French Cultural Center. The opening

ceremony will be at 6.30pm, and the exhibition will run until 26 October.

Concert

■ The Jordanian piano trio of Rula Nabeel, Tala Tutunji, and Tarek Younis will perform a concert at the Royal Cultural Center in cooperation with the Jerusalem Forum and the Goethe Institute at 8 pm on the 7 October. Works by Mozart, Brahms, Debussy and Schubert will be played by the trio.

Film

■ The 1980 film 'Diva' will be shown at the French Cultural Center during two sessions, 6.30 and 8.30, on the 5 October. The film is about a man hunting his dream woman, and stars W. Fernandes and P. Andrei (with Arabic translation).

The Star's GUIDE

Programs on JTV
from 3—9 October.

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Postman Pat (Cartoon)
3:30—Clowning Around
4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
4:30—Scandi Nature (Doc.)
5:00—French Prog.
6:00—Sea Quest
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Prog.
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—You Bet Your Life
8:00—Cinema, Cinema
8:30—Prism (Talk Show)
9:10—Stream (Drama)
10:00—News At Ten
10:30—Film
12:00—Country Music

SUNDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Pink Panther (Cart.)
3:30—Pumpkin Patch
3:30—The Adventures of the Black Stallion
4:00—American Chart Show
5:00—NBA
6:00—French Program
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Life's Most Embarrassing Moments
8:00—World Net
8:30—Challenges
9:00—Renegade (Drama)
10:00—News in English
10:30—Drama

MONDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Highlander (Cartoon)
3:30—The Gentle from Down Under (Drama)
4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
4:30—Last Frontiers (Doc.)
5:00—French Program
6:00—Sea Quest
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Program



American Chart Show, Sunday at 4:00 pm.

7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Hope & Gloria
8:00—Perspective
8:30—World Net
9:10—Good Guys, Bad Guys
10:00—News At Ten
10:30—Drama

TUESDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Pink Panther
3:30—Small Talk (Quiz)
4:00—Neighbors
4:30—Life Choices (Doc.)
5:00—Royal Blood (Doc.)
6:00—French Program

WEDNESDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin
3:30—Halfway Across The

Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 4634149): Hoodlum
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 4634149): Grease
- Galleria I (Tel: 079 33430): Armageddon
- Galleria II (Tel: 079 33430): Marvin's Room
- Plaza (Tel: 5699238): Al Za'eem (Arabic)
- Concord I (Tel: 5677420): Nasser (Arabic)
- Concord II (Tel: 5677420): Up Close & Personal

Galaxy & Turn Left
4:00—The Album Show
5:00—French Program
6:15—Sea Quest
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Program
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Keeping Mum (Com.)
8:00—Envoy Special
8:30—Computer Chronicles
9:10—Kung-Fu
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Chicago Hope
12:00—Bugs (Drama)

THURSDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Animated Hero Classics (Cartoon)
3:30—Star Runner (Drama)
4:00—L'Ecole Des Fans
4:30—Blue Water Dreaming (Documentary)
5:00—NBA Games
6:15—Silders
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Prog.
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Family Matters
8:00—Great Romances of the 20th Century
8:30—Dr Quinn Medicine Woman (Drama)
9:10—Oprah Winfrey
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Film
12:00—Can't Hurry Love

FRIDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin (Cartoon)
3:30—The Borrowers
4:00—Film: Big Food
6:15—Les Cles De Fort Boyard (Quiz)
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Prog.
7:30—News Headlines

7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air
8:00—Life on the Digital Edge
8:30—The Seven Wonders of the World
9:10—Babylon 5
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—The X Files (Drama)
12:00—Big Sky (Drama)

PROGRAMMES EN FRAN AIS

SAMEDI

17:00—Faut pas rêver
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine L'œuf de Colomb

DIMANCHE

18:00—Bonne espérance
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—E-M6

LUNDI

17:00—Thalassé
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine scientifique

MARDI

18:00—Les cours brûlés
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Fractales

MERCREDI

17:00—Ushuaia
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—E-M6
20:00—Envoyé spécial

JEUDI

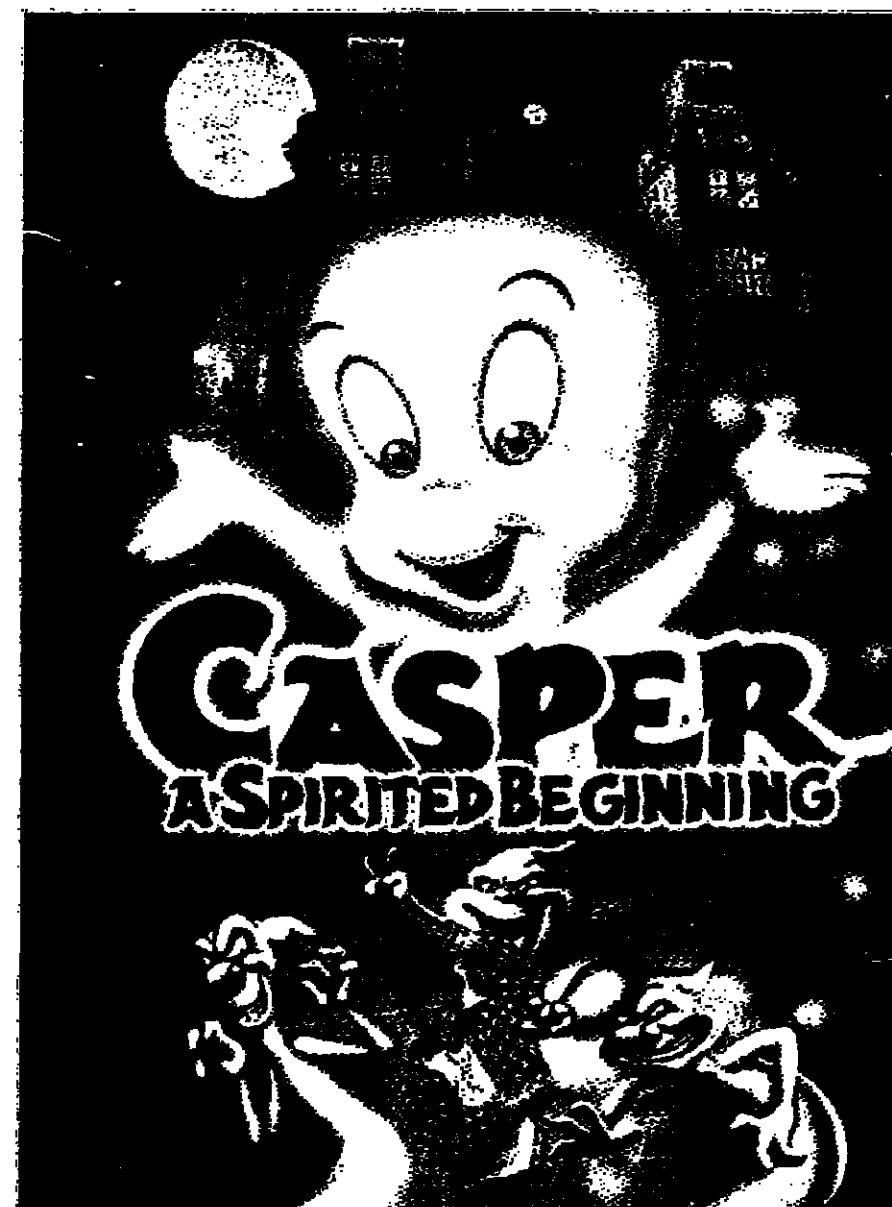
16:00—L'école des fans
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine L'œuf de Colomb

VENREDI

18:15—Fort Boyard
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Abô la Terre

Programs are subject to change by JTV

FILM



REJOIN your favorite memories from the box-office hit and meet some new friends too. Get set for supernatural fun with Steve GUTTENBERG, Lori LOUGHLIN, Rodney DAN-GERFIELD, the voices of James EARL JONES, Paul SHORE and, of course, the ghost with the most, CASPER!

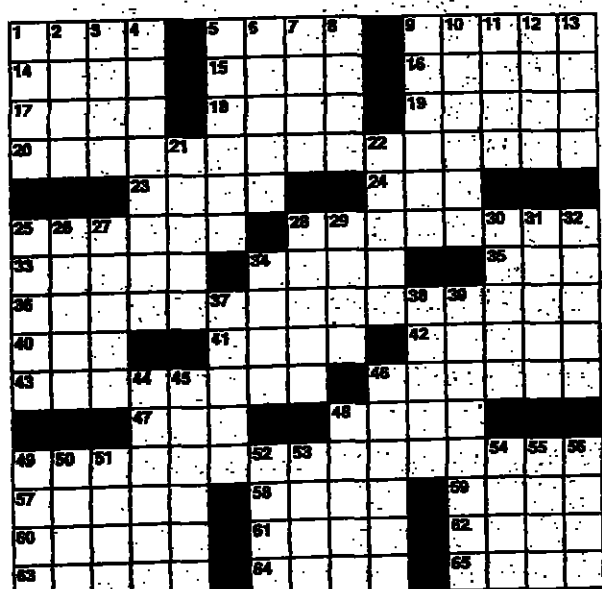
CASPER IS BACK, and he's on the run from the evil 'Kibosh,' his assistant 'Snivel' and the outrageous ghostly trio, 'Stretch, Shrinkie and Fasta.' Through his run, Casper finds a friend to help him, and soon they both discover his ghostly powers to save their town from the wrecking ball. Casper's efforts reunite a father and son by filling them with his spirit of hope and excitement. A spectacular blend of live-art animation, "Casper, A Spirited Beginning" conjures up laughs and surprises that will boost your spirits and entertain the entire family.

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 - Concert halls
 - Kinematic
 - Smell boy
 - Constituent of steel
 - Landon's sign
 - Judge's seat
 - Goodies
 - Lat
 - Houston pros
 - Power agency
 - by League
 - Tenants' contract
 - Add used in beverages
 - Acres
 - Lupino
 - Provide a chair for
 - Miami pros
 - In a state of wonder
 - Architect
 - Starfish
 - English composer
 - More modern
 - "saw Elba"
 - Vessel of 1482
 - Painting style
 - Forest art
 - mail
 - Letter opener
 - DOWN
 - Stiff of ten
 - It's
 - Of grandeur
 - Ascertain
 - Swiss bunch
 - Word opera
 - High time
 - Narc target
 - Disney
 - I came, I conquered
 - Battle or battle
 - Follow
 - Holy women
 - Joy
 - Constellation
 - Commerce
 - Hebrew prophet
 - Wedding
 - Great fear
 - Older part
 - Exemplar
 - Succinct
 - Abated
 - Romantic
 - Caravansary
 - Greek epic
 - Swisspe's features
 - Mrs. Gore
 - Cling
 - French painter
 - Rane's garment
 - Mid oath
 - Maiding
 - Grassy place
 - Patched
 - Border tale
 - Karenine
 - Entry duplet

-This Week's- HOROSCOPES

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: The moon's in Aries, opposite the sun in Libra. This should cause lots of interesting discussions.

Aries (March 21-April 19): You're hot with the moon in your sign, but you're running into opposition anyway. Get used to it.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): Watch out for a person with a hot temper. Give that one lots of room. You're strong and getting even stronger.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): Your friends are there for you, but they could interfere with your love life. You're under pressure to perform to rigid standards.

Cancer (June 22-July 22): An older person's a real pain, but don't mention it. You'll just make matters worse. Make time for your friends. They've been missing you, and vice versa.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Travel and romance are favored. If you get the day off, congratulations. A tough old cookie is watching you pretty closely.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Get your money into order so you can try something bold. You'll be feeling more outrageous, a condition that extends for the next several weeks.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): A confrontation causes you to take action in a direction you didn't expect. You may have to hustle to figure out how you're going to pay for it.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): Don't give in to panic if the work's too tough. It'll start making sense, and you'll start seeing results.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Play with love and you'll win. Don't goof around, however. Schedule your dates and give yourself plenty of time to talk.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Spend time fixing up something in your place that got broken. The fog will clear and it'll be easy to spot the problem areas. No need to talk about it. Your actions will speak louder than words.

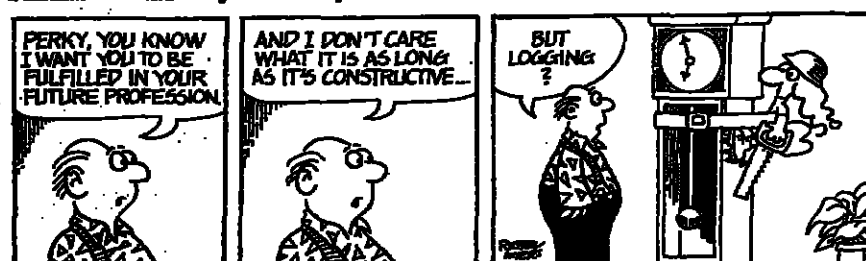
Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Gather information so you can make your big decision. Leaders will be more willing to part with their money, if that's a consideration.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): Better balance the checkbook before you pay the bills. If you wait to do your shopping, you'll find better deals, mainly because you'll be looking for them.

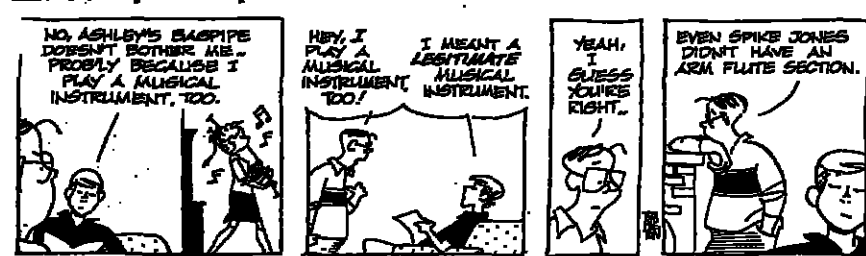
If You're Having a Birthday This Week: Romance looks very good this year, although it might turn out differently than you expected. A change in your own attitude is pivotal.

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PERKY & BEANZ by Russell Myers



ELWOOD by Ben Templeton & Tom Forman



CATFISH by Fred Wagner & Tom Cone



Jumble

Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RIMPE
PIMBL
ONSOAL
TORRAM



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: THE [] OF THE []

JO LOOT—her hat by dyeing her hair

ANSWERS: PRIME PRIME PRIME PRIME PRIME

Words of Wisdom

No one ever wins an argument with a customer.

An illiterate wise man isn't nearly as dangerous as an educated fool.

You may have superior skills, but if they aren't applied, no one will know it.

Don't worry about the guy following in your footsteps—he isn't likely to pass you.

It's the belief that everyone else is behaving well that largely keeps us from behaving badly.

Reach high; it will keep you on your toes.

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CHARLIE



"...Gee, too bad you're leaving such a friendly building."

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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Un Jordanien impliqué dans les attentats anti-américains

Deux hommes soupçonnés d'être impliqués dans les attentats anti-américains à Nairobi et Dar-es-Salaam au mois d'août dernier ont été inculpés cette semaine par un tribunal à New York pour meurtre et activités de complot. Les deux hommes, identifiés comme Mohammed Sadiq Odeh et Mohammed Rashid Daoud al-Owhali, connus également sous le nom de Khalid Salim Saleh ben Rashid, ont été inculpés de quatre chefs d'inculpation, dont celui de meurtre, pour les attentats du 7 août visant les ambassades américaines au Kenya et en Tanzanie qui avaient fait 258 morts et plusieurs milliers de blessés.

Selon les chefs d'inculpation, les deux hommes sont les membres présumés du groupe terroriste al-Qaida, le groupe international contrôlé par le financier d'origine saoudienne Oussama ben Laden (voir photo). Ils sont également soupçonnés d'avoir participé à plusieurs actes de terrorisme international entre 1994 et 1998.

Ces deux personnes sont accusées d'avoir tué des centaines de personnes civiles innocentes, a déclaré le procureur fédéral de New York, Mary Jo White, dans un communiqué. «Les événements d'aujourd'hui marquent un pas en avant dans le processus visant à traduire les responsables de ces attentats, contre la communauté internationale, devant la justice», a-t-elle ajouté.

Les deux hommes avaient été arrêtés à la fin du mois d'août dans la capitale kenyane et remis peu de temps après à la sûreté fédérale américaine (FBI). Selon l'accusation, al-Owhali est Yéménite. Sadiq Odeh est quant à lui Jordanien. S'ils sont coupables, les deux hommes risquent des peines d'emprisonnement à vie sans possibilité de libération conditionnelle.



Éclaboussures

Pharmacies, s'abstenir !

Côté médecins, on a confiance. Oh, sans excès, depuis que, au lieu de déceler une grossesse - ce que n'importe quel cabinet vous fait en un tour de main - un docteur jordanien a cru, du haut de sa science, diagnostiquer après analyses coûteuses une infection urinaire et prescrit des antibiotiques à la future mère. Mais passons, errare humanum est. En revanche, côté pharmaciens, c'est plutôt ignoscere humanum est. «Ma petite est enrhumée, j'aimerais des gouttes pour le nez, s'il vous plaît». Elle sort un sirop. «Non, des gouttes, s'il vous plaît». «Ah...!», elle sort un autre sirop. «Non, des gouttes pour le nez, la el mukhar». Troisième potion. «Non, pour le nez, binti mrashta (ma fille a un rhume), mukharha msaker, quelque chose pour lui déboucher le nez, MUNKHAR». Il se jette en pointant obstinément le doigt sur le p'tit bout de nez de ma mère. «Aaaa... des gouttes pour les enfants...».

Un petit problème de santé vous taquine ? Parcourez les pharmacies, c'est éditant. Vous récolterez des réponses aussi hétéroclites que : «Moi, ch'ui pas, allez voir le médecin» (avec un peu de chance, vous repartirez avec l'adresse du copain), «Achetez-moi ça et tout ira bien» ou «Ce n'est rien, ça va passer tout seul (mais dire exactement ce que c'est, ça j'y peux pas)». Et le confrère d'ajouter : «Allez, sans tarder chez le docteur, cela pourrait être grave». Peut-être s'en trouvera-t-il un pour vous donner quelques explications de base, celles dont, par bon sens, vous vous doutez déjà.

Maintenant, vous cherchez un médicament : «Ceci, c'est excellent, on ne peut trouver mieux là». Vous vous enquêrez alors de l'existence d'un produit similaire de fabrication jordanienne : «Où... il y aurait... peut-être éventuellement... Mais le premier est bien meilleur !». La composition est la même, mais bien entendu le produit étranger pèse plus lourd dans la poche de ces marchands de pilules, puisque trois fois plus cher. De simples commerçants, ils le sont tout autant lorsqu'ils délivrent, sans s'inquiéter de leur usage, antibiotiques et autres médicaments à utiliser avec précaution. On pourrait se shooter avec la complexité de ces pharmaciens satisfaits d'encaisser le bénéfice. Finalement, profiter humanum est...

Mieux vaudrait s'inventer idiot ou naïf, comme jadis : «M'sieur le Pharmacien m'a donné des tablettes et le mal a disparu, ce doit être vraiment un très grand savoir !». Mais vous risquez d'acheter un médicament qui n'a rien à voir avec vos maux de santé.

Où alors vous êtes bien informé. Pas besoin d'avoir suivi la fac ! Les bons conseils de maman, les cours de biologie du lycée et un peu de documentation glanée dans de bons magazines suffiront à coloniser les brèches d'ignorance et de négligence de ces boutiquiers.

Et sur les notices d'emballage, abstenez-vous de lire les remarques du style : «Si les symptômes persistent, veuillez consulter votre médecin ou (pire) votre pharmacien».



Une coalition de 53 députés s'est formée pour notamment demander au gouvernement de mettre fin à une normalisation «au service de l'État hébreu».

Le gouvernement. Tarawneh peut désormais travailler tranquille. Jeudi dernier, il a obtenu la confiance de 64 députés sur les 79 présents. C'est le deuxième cabinet à obtenir un soutien aussi massif depuis 1989 et l'ouverture démocratique du pays.

Avant le vote, les députés avaient discuté pendant deux jours-marathon le programme gouvernemental présenté auparavant au cours d'une session extraordinaire.

L'intervention la plus marquante fut celle du député Abdul-Karim Doughmi, au nom de 53 de ses collègues appartenant à trois blocs différents («Solidarité», «Entente» et «Rassemblement»), plus un certain nombre d'indépendants. Une première dans les annales de la vie parlementaire jordanienne. Dans son discours uni-

taire, Abdul-Karim Doughmi a exigé des solutions concrètes aux grands problèmes du pays : la pauvreté, le chômage, la stagnation économique, les difficultés de l'agriculture, la réforme administrative, la lutte contre la corruption... Les députés de la coalition ont aussi demandé l'arrêt d'une normalisation «au service de l'État hébreu», et ont insisté sur le renforcement des relations avec les États arabes, qui entourent la Jordanie.

Certes, la coalition a réclamé «la poursuite du programme d'ajustement économique et la reconstruction de l'économie nationale», mais elle s'est montrée critique à l'égard des privatisations.

Plus important : les députés de ce groupement ont annoncé qu'ils donnaient au nouveau gouvernement «une confiance

sous conditions». En clair, ils lui accordent un délai de cinq ou six mois pour appliquer ce qu'il a promis. Bien entendu, la menace est surtout formelle mais elle a le mérite d'être originale. Les Chambres précédentes n'en avaient jamais usé !

Les discours des autres députés, représentants des blocs ou des partis politiques ou même des courants, étaient encore plus exigeants concernant certains dossiers : l'eau, la Palestine, la nécessité de réviser la loi sur les publications, la sécurité sociale, les libertés publiques, les pots-de-vin...

«Tout reste à faire»

Il n'y a finalement pas eu de surprises dans les résultats des votes. Les trois partis d'opposition (gauche démocratique, Baath, Parti communiste) ont voté contre, les députés islamistes indépendants sont apparus divisés et la coalition, sauf quelques défections, a largement plébiscité le programme de Faysal Tarawneh.

Il est vrai que le Premier ministre, peu avant le vote et même lors de sa conférence de presse samedi dernier, avait renouvelé ses bonnes intentions à l'égard du groupe le plus fort du Parlement. Il savait que le soutien de la coalition était décisif pour obtenir

Politique

Cette fois, il faut vraiment changer

80% : qui dit mieux ? Faysal Tarawneh a obtenu des députés une confiance-record pour son gouvernement. Mais il ne s'agit pas d'un plébiscite aveugle. Le Premier ministre l'a bien compris. Les parlementaires et le peuple attendent beaucoup de lui.

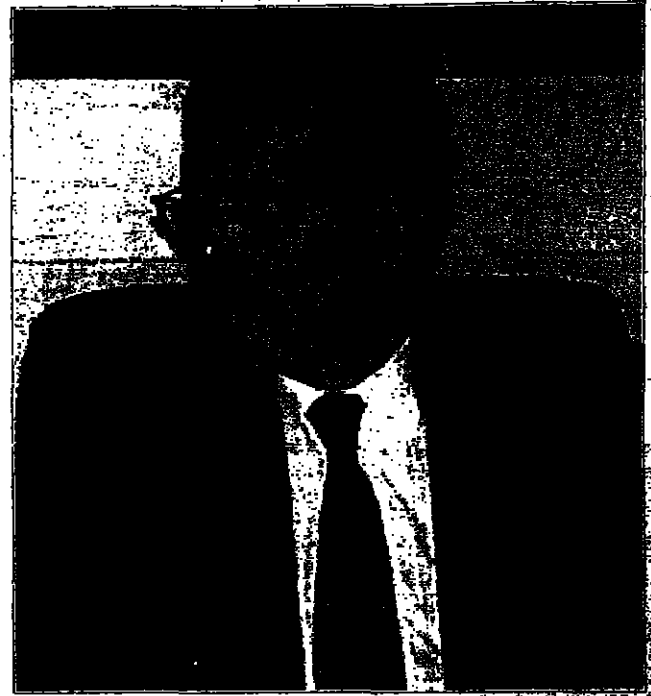
s'accompagne souvent d'un refrain à la mode : «Le gouvernement a obtenu la confiance de la majorité de la Chambre, il lui reste à gagner celle du peuple», qui n'a jamais été aussi faible sous les cabinets Majali.

Pour y arriver, le gouvernement sait très bien qu'il faut des mesures concrètes, même si, comme le reconnaît lui-même le Premier ministre, la marge de manœuvre est limitée. C'est par des mesures sociales que le

nouveau gouvernement pourrait faire ses preuves et marquer les esprits (réduction du prix du pain, augmentation des salaires...). Dans le même sens, un dialogue constant avec les institutions de la société civile et une détermination sur la question des libertés publiques sont sans aucun doute nécessaires.

Par ailleurs, une certaine fermeté à l'égard du gouvernement israélien s'impose. La semaine dernière, le Premier ministre a convoqué l'ambassadeur israélien pour exprimer l'inquiétude de la Jordanie après les affrontements d'Oum el-Fahm entre forces de police et Arabes israéliens. Si on ajoute à cela, la condamnation récente de la coopération militaire israélo-jordanienne par la Ligue Arabe avec l'approbation du représentant jordanien, on constate qu'un souffle nouveau traverse la politique étrangère jordanienne : peut-être l'annonce d'un rapprochement plus décisif avec les États arabes.

«Changement dans la conduite», pourrait être le slogan du cabinet Tarawneh. Les Jordanais, qui voient leur pays devant eux, attendent beaucoup plus : «Pour aller plus loin, cette fois, il faut vraiment changer !».



Faysal Tarawneh a su, à merveille, ménager la chèvre et le chou pour convaincre.

Le Moyen-Orient dans la presse française Et le processus de paix, nom d'une pipe !



Arafat et Clinton en janvier dernier. Déjà le processus de paix était sacrifié sur l'autel de la «Monicagate-mania».

La presse française est toujours branchée sur le Monicagate à Washington. Bernard Guetta, dans l'édition du 17 septembre du *Nouvel Observateur*, titre son editorial sur «La démocratie en danger» et dénonce cette «Amérique qui déraille». L'Amérique est-elle dérangée ? Elle l'est car elle est la plus grande démocratie du monde, mais aucun démocrate ne peut aujourd'hui se reconnaître en elle. En ces jours sombres, l'Amérique est un pays d'insécurité... Du coup, le journaliste n'hésite pas à aller chercher ailleurs le leadership mondial : Le monde a besoin d'un nouveau pôle. Le monde a besoin de l'Europe, d'une Europe unie, forte, décidée à faire entendre sa voix, celle de la démocratie.

La même semaine, *Le Point* rappelle que sur le dossier du processus de paix, il faut néanmoins encore compter sur l'Amérique de Clinton : «Seuls les États-Unis peuvent relancer la négociation, éviter le pire. Au Proche-Orient, plus que partout ailleurs, une Amérique affaiblie est un grave facteur d'instabilité... L'Amérique n'est plus, pour l'instant, en mesure d'assumer véritablement son rôle dans cette région névralgique. Situation dangereuse. Car, sur ce gigantesque arc de crise qui va du Levant au Golfe persique et à l'Asie centrale, se préparent les reconquêtes américaines de demain». Dans le même article, le chroniqueur, Pierre Beylat, dresse un bilan peu avantageux du processus de paix, cinq ans après Oslo : «L'espoir est mortifère... Rubin est tombé sous les balles d'un zélateur du grand Israël. Arafat est relégué au rang de gouverneur d'une sorte de banatistan».

Pour le quotidien *Le Monde* (26 septembre), la diplomatie américaine s'effrite dans le conflit israélo-palestinien. Georges Marion évoque la visite infructueuse du médiateur américain dans la région. «Dix jours d'incessantes nouvelles entre Jérusalem, Ramallah, Gaza, Le Caire et Amman n'auront pas permis à Dennis



Ross, de rapprocher les points de vue des Israéliens et ceux des Palestiniens». Le journaliste ajoute qu'à l'évidence, c'est la confiance mutuelle qui, dans cette affaire, fait le plus défaut. Côté israélien, on accuse les arabes en général, et les Palestiniens en particulier, de ne pas vouloir que le moment propice pour frapper Israël dans le dos. M. Arafat était notamment soupçonné de garder ouverte, par Hamas interposé, l'option

terroriste. Les Palestiniens, quant à eux, sont accusés de ne pas vouloir que M. Netanyahu utilise son mandat pour rendre impraticable le chemin tracé à Oslo. Il pourrait en parlant d'une «ouverture», d'autant plus vive qu'après être résignés à se ranger derrière la barrière américaine, les Palestiniens ne peuvent que constater la faiblesse du président Clinton, encloué dans le scandale Lewinsky».

Signe de l'Iran à Washington

«La riposte contre les talibans se prépare», est le deuxième article que *Le Point* publie sur le Proche-Orient. Selon l'hebdomadaire, deux scénarios sont possibles pour l'Iran : «Des frappes chirurgicales par l'aviation ou une conquête territoriale limitée, du type «zone tampon», au-delà de la mort des neuf ressortissants, l'Iran veut contraindre à tout prix la montée en puissance des chevaliers de Dieu afghans et sunnites».

Toujours sur l'Iran, Khatami «cherche le dialogue à l'ONU», selon *Liberation* (23 septembre). «Confronté à une double pression, celle provoquée par la situation en Afghanistan et celle que les milieux conservateurs font peser sur son gouvernement, le président iranien a pourtant cherché, aux Nations unies, à donner l'image d'un pays cherchant le dialogue, aussi bien avec les États-Unis qu'avec les talibans».

D'autre part, Jean-Pierre Perrin qualifie la condamnation du terrorisme de Khatami, de «signe adressé à Clinton, qui avait appelé la communauté internationale à s'unir pour mieux lutter contre cette menace». Le journaliste ajoute enfin que cette déclaration, «si elle ne cite pas explicitement les États-Unis, constitue un nouveau «petit pas» en direction de Washington».

Nabed Al-Khlouf

Polis, personne ne parle !

Après Amman, les œuvres de l'artiste palestinien iront, d'ici deux semaines, égayer Irbid. Embarquement pour une traversée onirique, dans le silence des réflexions.

Son nom fouette comme le pinceau rageur sur une toile blanche. Évocateur grecque d'une cité en ordre ou autoritarisme en marche mêlé aux paroles sans concession d'une pop-star anglaise ? Ces définitions éponymes pourraient correspondre au physique de notre homme : trapu, lippu, cou de taureau, il ne manque plus à Mohammed Polis que l'uniforme pour jouer les cops à New York. La surprise est d'autant plus grande, quand on découvre ses peintures qui n'ont rien d'une organisation calculée ou d'un régime au pas

de l'oe. S'ouvre devant nos yeux quelque peu incrédules, il faut bien le dire, un espace d'émotion où seul le pinceau semble le maître des lieux.

«Il tient son art de l'enfance, de l'innocence et de la spontanéité qu'il puise dans la nature», dit de Polis le poète tunisien Abdul Razzak Al-Jumali, il est tantôt amoureux, tantôt réveur et souvent observateur. Son art n'est pas définissable et son tableau commence là où il est censé se terminer. Polis, plus près de l'abîme que de la brute épaissie.

N'est-il pas né, il y a 48 ans,

à Béthléem, ville d'amour et de paix ? Depuis ces matins-clins où il suivait son père dans son atelier - «il me réveillait très tôt pour que je l'observe en train de sculpter» -, le petit Mohammed a rapidement gravi les échelons de la reconnaissance. Récompensé dans le monde arabe et en Occident, son œuvre, «dialogue entre les chevaliers de l'art», a beaucoup voyagé (Belgique, Pays-Bas, Allemagne, Yémen, Irak, Égypte...). Depuis 14 ans, il vit dans le pays de sa femme, une artiste tunisienne. Mais il revient souvent sur les lieux de ses

débuts : «J'ai décidé de faire cette expo en Jordanie parce que j'ai toujours la nostalgie de ce pays où j'ai grandi et où je garde de bons amis».

Intitulé de l'exposition qui vient de s'achever à Ras-el-Ain et que l'on retrouvera bientôt à Irbid : «La musique et la couleur», qui, en 35 tableaux, se fonde dans une lumière éblouissante et harmonieuse.

Mais Mohammed Polis ne se contente pas de peindre. Selon la peintre jordanienne Najis Andalouzi, ses toiles sont aussi des mots que des orsiles pressées ne sauront entendre : «Ses paroles s'adressent directement au cœur pour y faire jaillir des sources éternelles de splendeur et de beauté. Les mots même sortent d'entre ses doigts et les couleurs en disent assez, pour que les bouches se taisent et les yeux se ferment». Difficile de faire critique plus élogieuse.

Poumon du tableau

Cependant pas de longs discours chez Polis, plutôt des suggestions. Ses personnages sont réduits à de simples inflexions du pinceau : silhouettes longilignes, comparses à la fois pastel et léchés. Tout au long de l'exposition, on retrouve à plusieurs reprises ces yeux effrayés qui vous fixent avec angoisse, ce regard insaisissable dont l'horreur en dit long sur l'âme tourmentée de l'artiste palestinien : «Mais je veux toujours garder mon attachement à une pureté à venir», commente-t-il, optimiste.

Le peintre varie les techniques selon son inspiration (expressionnisme, figuratif ou même surréalisme). Inclassable, il n'obéit à aucune règle ou norme mais son œil scrutateur est toujours celui d'un impressionniste, tenté par l'abstrait. «Ce goût pour l'abstrait est chez moi une façon d'appeler les spectateurs à une sorte d'introspection intellectuelle. L'art abstrait apporte des signes et des symboles qui permettent de donner aux tableaux toutes les interprétations possibles», explique Polis avant de préciser : «L'espace dans ma peinture est le poumon du tableau qui pousse le spectateur à se poser des questions. Cet espace qui découvre des horizons nouveaux, fait partie intégrante du tableau».



Des yeux effrayés qui vous fixent avec angoisse, un regard insaisissable dont l'horreur en dit long sur l'âme tourmentée de l'artiste palestinien.

Youssef Abu Saleh

Véronique Abu-Nijmeh

PAIN

de la table de la fraternité. D'où l'expression arabe : « Il y a du pain pour tous », ce qui revient à dire « nous sommes de bons frères ». Mais, dans le sens également que pain vient enrichir notre existence, nous sommes un compagnon est quelqu'un avec qui on partage son pain (avec le préfixe d'origine latine co-, ensemble).

L'arabe nous en connaissait un verbe apaner, nourrir de pain. C'est d'où, l'français moderne, il n'a produit qu'un dérivé : apanage, qui est en regard une portion du domaine royal qu'un souverain accordait aux cadets de la maison de France en compensation de leur exclusion de la couronne. Il a pris ensuite le sens d'avoir de son pain : bien exclusif. Le pain est donc l'apanage de l'homme.

**Le pain,
compo-
sant es-
sentiel de
notre ali-
menta-
tion.**



Divya, film de Jean-Jacques Beineix (1980), couleur, sous-titré en arabe. Une des plus grandes soprano du monde refuse de se laisser enregistrer. Un chasseur de sons ne respecte pas sa volonté. Sa passion va l'entraîner dans une implacable chasse à l'homme... Séances au Centre culturel français le lundi 5 octobre à 18h30 et 20h30.

Les sculptures de l'artiste Lamia Jamal sont au CCF jusqu'au 26 octobre. Vernissage le mercredi 7 à 18h30.

Antoine Marette

The Star Stadium

Edited by Abdul Hamid Adnani

Pan-Arab Games update

Kuwait to boycott the games

DOHA (The Star)—During the 7th Arab Football Cup in Doha, Sheikh Ahmad Al Sabah, president of the Kuwaiti Olympic Committee, made a shock announcement. If Iraq participates in the next Pan Arab Games, then Kuwait will not attend.

He assured that the good relations between Jordan and Kuwait would not be affected, if the boycott does in fact take place. He said that if Iraq were to pull out of the games, then Kuwait would be happy to send a big delegation of athletes.

Jordan out of Arab Cup despite Fokasheer eating Mansaf

DOHA (The Star)—Jordan was eliminated from the first round of the 7th Arab Football Cup, after losing the decisive match against Qatar 0-2. Jordan won their first match against Libya 2-1.

The results were partly expected, due to the mismanagement of the Yugoslavian coach Fokasheer, who critics say played many players out of position.

Fokasheer ate mansaf before the game—but the old adage of 'if you eat the local food, all will go well,' did not materialize. Neither did it gain the respect of the players.

In the end, however, the mistakes were made by the players on the pitch, and only the players should be blamed. Greater efforts are needed if Jordan is to hold onto the Pan Arab Games title.

Floodlights, at last in Al Petra Stadium

AMMAN (The Star)—Al Petra stadium, the second most



Not wanting to get his hands dirty may have been Fokasheer's biggest problem



Amman International Stadium in transition

New seats for Amman International Stadium

AMMAN (The Star)—Al Hussein Youth City management has started to enlarge the capacity of Amman International Stadium. The stadium will witness the opening and the closing ceremonies of the next Pan Arab Games.

The enlargement of the stadium will bring the first class seating capacity up to 6000. The enlargement will also include the official/VIP area, with more seats for journalists and guests.

Men's Handball team on a losing streak

CAIRO (The Star)—The Jordanian Men's Handball team lost their first match against Bahrain 28-21, during the first Arab Handball Cup, which started in Cairo this week.

Despite the defeat, the Jordanian performance keeps on improving under the supervision of the Iraqi Coach, Thafar Al Sabeh.

We hope that the Jordanian Handball team will get things right before the Pan Arab Games next year.



Jordan's Mens Handball team, beaten but not down

English Premier League match reports

Aston Villa (1) Derby County (0)

England international Paul Merson put Villa five points clear at the top of the table with a well-taken goal in the 15th minute when he beat the offside trap and slotted the ball inside the left-hand post. Villa, now have 17 points from seven games, and have not started the season so well for decades.

Charlton Athletic (1) Coventry City (1)

Struggling Coventry picked up their first points away from home through a diving headed goal from Noel Whelan in the 69th minute but Andy Hunt equalized for Charlton five minutes later with a curling shot.

Chelsea (2) Middlesbrough (0)

Middlesbrough's Gary Pallister deflected

a cross-cut-shot from Brian Laudrup into his own net in the 46th minute to put Chelsea ahead. The Londoners dominated most of the rest of the match before sealing three points with an 81st minute chip from Italian forward Gianfranco Zola.

Everton (0) Blackburn Rovers (0)

Blackburn's Swedish international Martin Dahlin was sent off in the 73rd minute after a clash with Marco Materazzi. The game was littered with bookings. Everton

threw everything forward but failed to pick up their first home victory of the season in a largely dull match.

Newcastle (2) Nottingham Forest (0)

England captain Alan Shearer scored in the 11th and 89th minutes, the second a penalty, but United were made to work hard for their three points.

Sheffield Wednesday (1) Arsenal (0)

Sheffield Wednesday snatched a surprise victory with a spectacular winner from Lee Briscoe but the game was marred by the behaviour of Italian striker Paolo Di Canio who floored referee Paul Alcock after he showed him the red card for violent conduct.

Tottenham Hotspur (3) Leeds United (3)

Leeds were heading towards a 3-2 win after goals from Gunnar Halle (44th), Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (26th) and Clive Wijnald (61st). But a dramatic late header from Sol Campbell helped Spurs grab a point after a comeback from 3-1 down. Ramon Vega (14th) and Steffen Iversen (71st) got the other Spurs goals.

Liverpool (0) Manchester United (2)

A terrific win in the opening match of the week. The goals were scored by Dennis Irwin from a penalty shot in the 17th minute of the first half. Scholes added the second in the 79th minute.

French 1st Division match reports

Girondins Bordeaux (4) Rennes (0)

Bordeaux answered critics who said they were wobbling at home after being held 1-1 by Rapid Vienna in the first leg of their UEFA Cup tie last week. 'We had to make ourselves respected at our ground,' coach Elie Baup said ahead of the away leg.

Monaco (3) Le Havre (0)

Croatian striker Robert Spehar impressed coach Jean Tigana with a fine performance in an unaccustomed playmaking role, while young midfielder Francisco Da Costa celebrated his first call to the Portuguese national team.

Lorient (1) Metz (1)

Metz ended their league goal drought after 622 minutes—eight short of seven games—with Yugoslav striker Nenad Jestrovic's equaliser after veteran Ali Bouffiau scored his fourth goal of the season for the

A life of speedy ascension—from shy Dee Dee to flamboyant FloJo

By Julie Cart

FEW HAD any inkling of it, but Florence Delorez Griffith Joyner—the fabulous FloJo—was painfully shy and deeply insecure. Underneath her skin-tight running suits and her lavishly manicured nails lived a little girl who stoically bore the taunts of other children and resolved to show the world that, some day, she would live her dreams.

Griffith Joyner had wild, unlikely dreams growing up in the Jordan Downs housing projects in the Watts section of Los Angeles. Her visions of international fame and high accomplishment seemed as fantastic as they were unrealistic for a girl with 10 brothers and sisters in a family supported by a divorced mother.

But little Dee Dee, as she was called, refused to give up her aspirations, even as they were ridiculed by others, even as adults implored her to rein in her longings.

No one could convince Florence that she would not be the artist, beautician, poet and designer that she saw herself being. One day in school, her teacher asked her what she wanted to be.

"Everything," she said. "I want to be everything."

At first, she made the mistake of announcing to other children what a fabulous life she was preparing for. When they laughed and made her cry, she learned to keep to herself, to hold her tears until she got home. I learnt to cry when I got home," Griffith Joyner told the Los Angeles Times in 1988. "I learned that when you try to do right and you try to please everybody, they will still laugh at you and they will still talk about you."

Florence, who always had a sense of being different, decided early on not to be ashamed of her uniqueness, but to make it her signature. She went to school in all manner of

unusual dress. She wore different colored socks. She twirled her hair into elaborate piled-up styles. Dissatisfied with the limited spectrum available in her mother's nail polish, Florence mixed crushed crayons into clear polish to create her own shades.

Because her mother did not allow the Griffith children to roam freely in the dangerous neighborhood, the brothers and sisters became their own, tight play unit. That meant Florence played with her brothers under their rules. She played basketball and football. They had footraces in the street. They had hand-stand contests. She won.

Florence played with her brothers and their friends until they were reminded that she was a girl and not welcome. Undaunted, she spent hours in her mother's closet, trying on dresses and stockings and oversized shoes, acting out her future famous life in her fine clothes.

On paper, Florence designed gowns and delicate dresses that she would wear to the fabulous parties that, in her dreams, she attended. When the children visited their father, who lived in the Mojave Desert, they returned with exaggerated diction. Robert Griffith drilled his children in "proper" English.

Florence always spoke softly and distinctly, using her meticulous enunciation to disguise a slight lisp. Other children made fun of the fancy way she spoke, interpreting her efforts to better herself as meaning she thought herself better than others. She was branded a snobby girl, and her shyness would forever be seen



The late Florence Griffith-Joyner out on a run with the U.S. President, Bill Clinton

as aloofness.

Florence filed these hurts along with the others and saved the pain until she needed it, when it became her motivation and inspiration. It drove her as she competed in track and field.

As before, others doubted her ability and her dreams. The scope of her achievement was beyond what anyone could have imagined. She was a sprinter in a world where the starting blocks were not even a sprinter's dream.

Only the middle-aged and the old, you are not going to make it. At Cal State Northridge, Griffith Joyner did not even make the first rung of the ladder.

She was tossed a few crumbs—positions on a relay team—but no one saw in her what she knew were there, a gold medal and a world record. Her persistence in the face of what others viewed as tightly limited ability was remarkable.

As her friends made the 1980 Olympic team and traveled in Europe, Florence stayed home, punishing her body in training. She would do it her own way. She would show them. "I have been running since I was 7," she said. "I was trying to restructure the way my body was made instead of trying to master the way I ran. I would get so frustrated with my starts in practice that I would just cry. When I ran, I

wouldn't even try to get out of the blocks, I would just run."

Eventually, coaches discovered that Griffith Joyner's athletic gift was not to be altered. It was hers, intact, as she had always seen it in her dreams. Once fired to be herself, Florence flourished.

Finally secure in her ability, she transformed into her alter ego, FloJo.

The little girl flew out of the closet and flounced about in her grown-up clothes. If perfect elocution could obscure a speech impediment, a uniform, she described as an "athletic negligee" might distract from her sub-par start. If sprinters were not to wear their fingernails long, lest they interfere with the mechanics of the start, then FloJo would cultivate hers to an extravagant length and decorate them.

The outlandish designs she had scribbled on bits of paper when she was child were carried over into the figure-revealing outfits Griffith Joyner introduced to the world in 1988. She was a sensation, both in how she ran and how she looked doing it. Most competitors were speechless. Those who weren't echoed the caty comments she'd been hearing all her life.

Her accomplishments allowed Griffith Joyner to tune out the negatives. She had done it, just as she always said she would, and, at last, she allowed herself a prolonged I-just-did-it moment. She still holding that

As the most gifted people, starting blocks. Griffith Joyner was a complicated person. There was little Dee Dee, bit-race. Really, coaches told her, you are not going to make it. At Cal State Northridge, Griffith Joyner did not even make the first rung of the ladder.

She was tossed a few crumbs—positions on a relay team—but no one saw in her what she knew were there, a gold medal and a world record. Her persistence in the face of what others viewed as tightly limited ability was remarkable.

As her friends made the 1980 Olympic team and traveled in Europe, Florence stayed home, punishing her body in training. She would do it her own way. She would show them. "I have been running since I was 7," she said. "I was trying to restructure the way my body was made instead of trying to master the way I ran. I would get so frustrated with my starts in practice that I would just cry. When I ran, I

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Football Roundup

top flight newcomers.

Nancy (0) Olympique Lyon (0)

Lyon missed suspended four-goal Swiss striker Marco Grassi as Nancy had the better of a tight match.

RC Lens (2) Nantes (4)

Lens coach Daniel Lederer got the fighting performance he wanted from his players following some poor results, but only after they gave away two bad goals in half an hour and left themselves with an uphill battle with two men sent off.

Strasbourg (2) Montpellier (1)

Strasbourg scored as many goals as they had in their previous six matches, climbing five places, and managed to shut out Montpellier's Ivorian striker Ibrahim Bakayoko who is still waiting to hear if he is moving to England's Everton.

Sochaux (1) Paris St Germain (0)

Sochaux kicked off as bottom club with one point from their opening match of the season and appeared to make matters worse by having Eric Boniface sent off for a bad tackle from behind on midfielder Yann Lachuer. But PSG paid for their poor scoring form when Bernard Lama handed the home side a winner.

Toulouse (0) AJ Auxerre (0)

Toulouse went a second game without conceding a goal after letting in 14 in their first five and Auxerre captain Gerald Batistie missed the clearest chance of match in 89th minute.

Bastia (0) Olympique Marseille (2)

The referee booked Bastia defender Patrick Valery and Marseille striker Titi Camara in the opening minute for tussling off the ball, setting the tone for good control of a potentially heated match well won by the visitors.

Italian Serie A match reports

Caligari (5) Sampdoria (0)

Sierra Leone forward Mohamed Kallon scored twice as newly-promoted Cagliari turned on the style against a Sampdoria side short of ideas. The visitors ended the match with nine men after Brazilian forward Cane and Yugoslav defender Nenad Sakic were sent off.

Empoli (1) Inter Milan (2)

Inter were forced to fight back after

Christian Bucchi had given the Tuscans a surprise lead on his Serie A debut. Empoli ended the match with nine men and without a goalkeeper. Midfielder Pierpaolo Bisoli had to play in goal in the closing minutes after Matteo Sereni was dismissed.

Parma (2) Lazio (2)

The match was suspended near the end of the first half after tear gas canisters were thrown on to the pitch by visiting supporters. Japanese Hidekoshi Nakata scored Parma's second goal. Lazio's Roberto Mancini was sent off for dissent.

Piacenza (2) Vicenza (0)

Midfielder Renato Buso gave Piacenza the lead in this early season relegation clash. Striker Davide Dionigi finished Vicenza off from the penalty spot after Giovanni Stroppa had been brought down.

Parma (1) Juventus (0)

Seven players were booked in this stormy encounter between the champions and one of their chief pretenders. One of those cautioned was Dino Baggio, scorer of the scrappy but decisive goal just after halftime. The result, and the scorer was a carbon copy of Parma's defeat of Juve in the 1995 UEFA Cup final.

AC Milan (1) Fiorentina (3)

Fiorentina, with a hat-trick from Gabriel Batistuta, dominated this top-of-the-table match. Besides a late Oliver Bierhoff penalty, Milan's only real chance came in the 47th minute when down 2-0, striker Maurizio Ganz's close-range shot was just cleared from the line by Cagliari defender Tomas Reple.

AS Roma (2) Venezia (0)

Roma bounced back from a disappointing away draw last week at Empoli with a 1-0 performance from center-forward Marco Delvecchio, who scored both goals to help his chances of winning a regular first-team spot.

Udinese (2) Salernitana (0)

Provincial club Udinese con-

tinued to soar thanks to Brazilian striker Amoroso, now joint top scorer with Batistuta with five goals in three games. Newly-promoted Salernitana, despite an attractive game, are still winless in the top-flight.

Bari (0) Bologna (0)

Bologna were fortunate to pick up their first point of the season as their keeper Francesco Antonioli was forced to make several fine saves to keep strikers Phil Masinga of South Africa and Gianluca Zambrotta from scoring.

German 1st Division results

Schalke 04 (0) Bayer Leverkusen (1)

B. Dortmund (2) VfL Wolfsburg (1)

SC Freiburg (2) MSV Duisburg (2)

B. M'gladbach (2) VfB Stuttgart (3)

Kaiserslautern (2) VfL Bochum (3)

Hamburg SV (1) Hansa Rostock (0)

Bayern Munich (1) W. Bremen (0)



Hassan Salah shows his determination for Bayern Munich



Arsenal captain, Tony Adams, keeping his eyes on the ball

THE STAR'S WORK COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

Going into production after extensive beta tests: Arabic Windows 98 to be released, very soon

BRINGING TO a close the most extensive Pan-Arab beta programme ever seen in the Arabic software industry, Microsoft Windows 98 Arabic Edition has been released to manufacture.

"Windows 98 Arabic Edition has already surpassed the strong demand we saw for the International Edition, with advance orders placed by distributors exceeding expectations. Part of the reason for that is the very positive response from our beta test sites across the region," said Asem Galal, product manager, Windows and desktop applications division at Microsoft Gulf.

The beta test programme for Windows 98 Arabic Edition has seen testing of the programme at over 200 sites across the Middle East region, placing the software in a wide variety of computing environments. In addition to the 'live' testing of Windows 98 Arabic Edition in user sites, the software has been installed and used actively on over 130 PCs at Microsoft's Arabic product development centre, located at the company's corporate campus in Redmond, Washington.

"Live testing of this beta has exceeded any other beta programme seen before for Arabic language software," said Bahram Mohazzabi, General Manager for Microsoft Gulf.

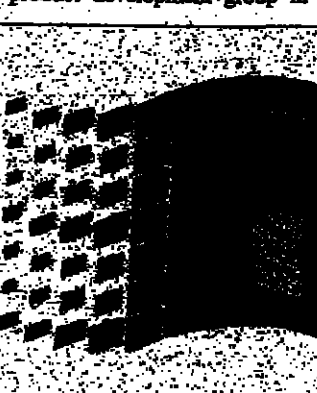
"Reactions from beta testers have been very positive indeed. They have consistently reported on the stability, functionality and ease of use of the Windows 98 Arabic Edition platform. We

have been delighted by their reactions to the software," Mohazzabi commented.

The beta programme has resulted in valuable feedback for Microsoft's developers. Each 'bug' report was sent to Microsoft Gulf's offices in Dubai, where staff worked to reproduce and finalize documentation of reported problems before advising the Arabic product development group in

features that have resulted in the strong sales and success of the Windows 98 English edition have been brought into Windows 98 Arabic Edition. "The easy installation routines, key applications such as Internet Explorer 4.0 functionality, Outlook Express, the system utilities and FAT32 are there, with full Arabic language support, in the new software. Users are being offered a rich, rewarding and empowering platform for today's computers, in Arabic," said Galal. "We've also included the Arabic enabled version of FrontPage Express, Microsoft's Internet Web development and management tool. The interface here has been retained in English, as the vast majority of developers have told us they would rather preserve an English language interface here."

New Arabic software development features Windows 98, launched in June 1998, saw key new functionality and capabilities added to the world's most popular computer operating system, Windows 95, which brought enhancements designed to make Windows work better and play better. Windows 98 Arabic Edition will see all of the enhancements which Windows 98 brought to users' desktops, as well as key new features, including new mirroring APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) to deliver operating system features in software, and therefore shortcut having to 're-invent the wheel' in their development mirroring



Windows 98 Arabic Edition logo

functions. "This feature alone will create a new impetus for the development of Arabic language applications. It is a key new function which enables faster, less expensive software development for Arabic language software developers," said Galal. As a leading regional Internet content and solutions developer, Khaled Galal Bicham, chairman and CEO of Egypt's leading Internet service provider, Link Egypt, commented, "For the first time, we are seeing an Arabic operating system which will have a fully integrated Arabic web browser with rich Internet capabilities."

Husni Al Mutasab, an instructor working in computer Arabization research at the King Fahad University of Petroleum and Minerals in Saudi Arabia, and also commends the upgrade to Windows 98 Arabic Edition to other users. "It is a powerful tool which we, as computer scientists in the Arab region, cannot live without," he said.

"Perhaps the best news of all for Arabic users is that the key

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Computer & IT companies!

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Off-the-shelf packaged software to solve the Year 2000 Problem

WITH THE advent of Year 2000 Problem—abbreviated as Y2K—a number of ready packages are being introduced by leading publishers, in the aim of assisting users to identify whether or not they have to worry about Y2K on their systems and software, as well as recommending means on how to correct the problem.

Norton 2000 Corporate Edition 1.0, from Symantec, is one such package. It blends Norton System Center with the latest version of Viasoft Inc.'s OnMark 2000 Assess.

The idea is to address the issues of Y2K at the desktop level; which includes small and medium size businesses. Although such users may think they have little to worry about, believing that only large software systems would suffer from Y2K, it has been proven

that a number of applications at the desktop level are to be affected. Some of Microsoft's office applications, especially Excel and Access, have certain files and components which will 'crash' under Windows 95, Windows NT and, possibly, Windows 98.

Norton 2000 aims to run checks on these applications, under these systems. What's more, it does not override Microsoft system software, but works under Microsoft's Management Console.

Of course, there are some computing applications, in the field of Y2K software, such as ZAC from Network Associates Inc.'s, BindView from BindView Development Corp. and Platinum Technology Inc.'s Trans Century Office.

These software applications run checks (trend-analysis) which provide reports that ex-

perienced network and system administrators can use to identify the locations of 'troubled' code which may result in problems.

Norton 2000 Corporate Edition is included in a number of other Norton packages, such as Norton AntiVirus; therefore offering more comprehensive checking software; seeing as Y2K has become a common-place problem, as common as viruses or typical system errors.

When installed within networks, Norton 2000 Corporate Edition provides cross-network checking, as do other applications, and it is important here to note that the installation and use of these ready applications is making it easier for information systems managers to—without having to seek specialized consultants—therefore, making the savings necessary to encourage small organizations to seek out affordable solutions to Y2K. That is the real progress achieved.



Y2K logo

News update

Y2K Seminar at the USIS

● The United States Information Service (USIS) held a seminar under the title of "Is it possible for computer systems to handle the Year 2000 problem?" The seminar was given by spe-

cialist speakers on the topic, like Mr. Munir Assad, Information Systems Manager at the Ministry of Planning, and Mr. Ramzi Bishara, Manager of the Computer Department of the Brinabank.

The idea behind the seminar was to discuss the means by which organizations can analyze and determine the degree of their Year 2000 compliance needs. Also, how organizations can go about the evaluation of the damage, or financial costs, involved in correcting the year 2000 problem (Y2K).

The seminar was attended by members of the press and interested individuals.

Comprehensive database on IT companies in region

● Web surfers will now be able to read informative updated news about the largest IT exhibition in the Middle East, The Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) has launched Gitec Online, an all-year round online web companion to the biggest Information Technology (IT) exhibition in the Middle East, held at the DWTC between 29 October and 2 November 1998.

The database of key companies and products in the regional IT industry is a first, and should be very useful for research and business sectors. To access this comprehensive database, go to www.dwtc.com.

Appointed a Microsoft Authorized Technical Education Center

INFORMATION Systems Group (ISIG), one of the largest computer and information technology companies in the region, has recently been appointed as a Microsoft Authorized Technical Education Center (ATEC). This appointment is a significant milestone for ISIG, as it allows the company to offer professional Microsoft degrees.

ISIG's training facilities are extensive with a total of 24 classrooms and over 3 days. The courses themselves run for 12 weeks, covering a wide range of applications such as Word 97, all the core Microsoft Office applications, and the latest developments in the area of Core technologies for MS Exchange.

For more information, contact ISIG at 5920605/5920609/079-30007.

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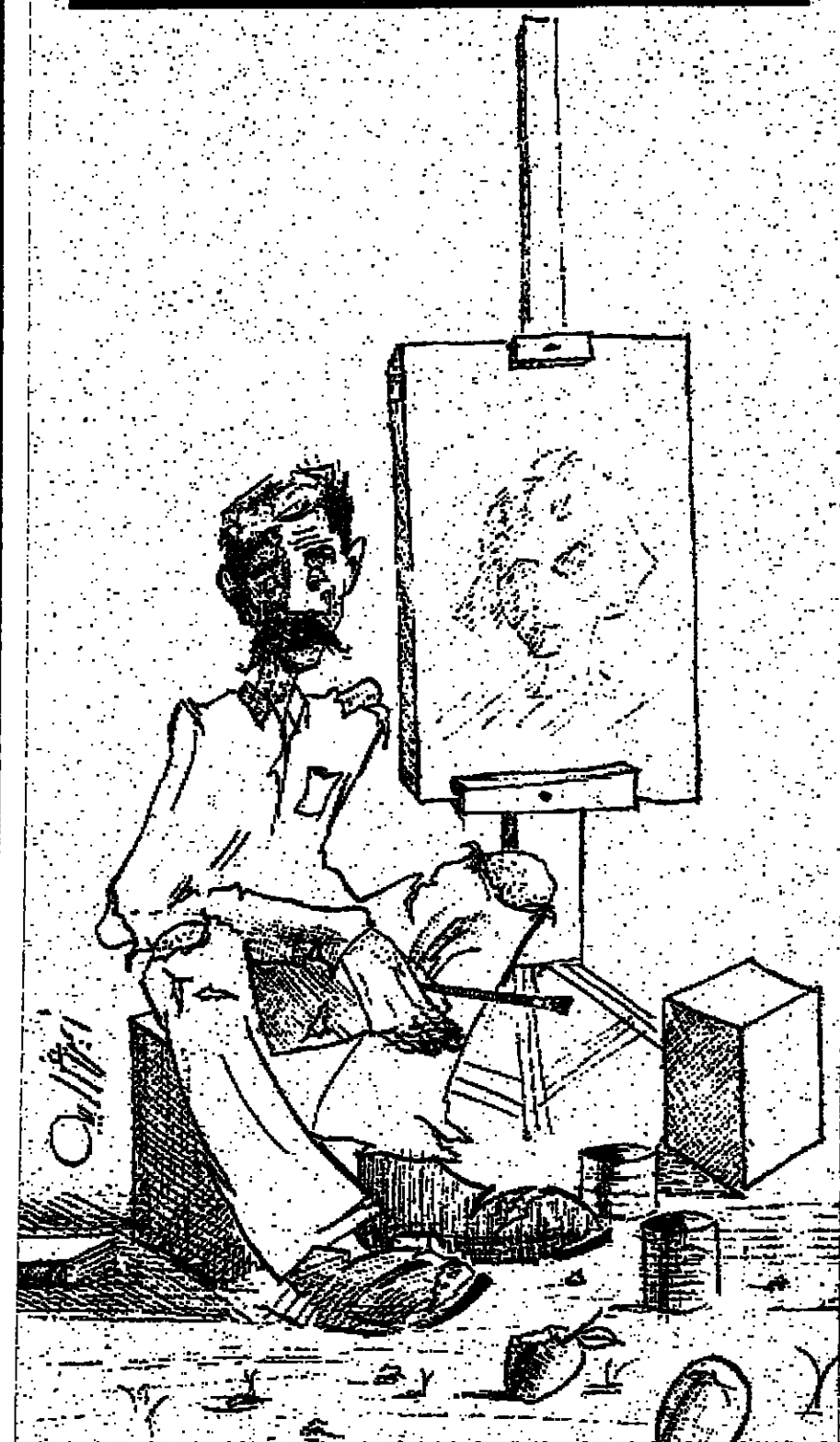
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ART



She eats celebrities for lunch

By Paul Brownfield

HOLLYWOOD—Sandra Bernhard began her career in 1975 on open-mike night at Ye Little Club in Beverly Hills, a now-defunct place that she describes as "this little bar where a lot of older, lushy Beverly Hills types would hang out." At the time, Bernhard was a manicurist, working in a Beverly Hills salon called Cia, with the occasional celebrity client—Dyan Cannon, Jaclyn Smith, Victoria Principal.

Knowing what we know about her today, it is highly appropriate that Bernhard should have once spent her days manicuring the likes of Victoria Principal. Then, as now, she got cozy with show business' pretty people, took good notes and read them back to us, to darkly comic effect.

Celebrity obsession, in fact, has been a Bernhard specialty for several decades—long before sycophantic, self-parodying media outlets like E! Entertainment Television came along to take the fun out of mocking stardom.

When Bernhard tells us the details of her friendships with Courtney Love or Madonna, for instance, she's satirizing our need to know about these people as much as the stars themselves, according to the *LA Times-Washington Post News Service*.

"But I wouldn't call my work mocking," says Bernhard, who is warming up for the Broadway run of her latest one-woman cabaret, "I'm Still Here...Damn It!"

"It's a strange combination of homage and weird respect and also kind of being on the outside looking in. Even though I'm in the business, I don't feel like I'm a part of it."

It is a late summer Friday, and Bernhard's publicist has suggested folding this inter-



Sandra Bernhard, in a Studio City restaurant, says her idea of comedy comes more out of left field than traditional stand-up material.

view into lunch and an afternoon of errands Bernhard has to run—to the shoe guy, to the photo development place to pick up pictures of a recent trip to Morocco, to Whole Foods grocery store.

The interview seems the errand for which Bernhard has the least energy. Between bites of a chicken breast sandwich, she answers questions about her career and personal life, but with a slight air of boredom. Bernhard has a way of making you feel as though you're back in high school, trying to ingratiate yourself with the coolest chick in class. What her body

language (and eventually yours) says is this: It's an empty task, this interview, ultimately meaningless, but we'll live, honey.

Of course, for Bernhard, 43, there are more important things to tend to these days than her next club show. Waiting at home in North Hollywood is her 2-month-old daughter, Cicely Yasin, a subject about which she's protective.

"That's why I kept (the pregnancy) private," she says of her decision to become a mother. "I didn't want people to misinterpret it as a publicity stunt."

In "I'm Still Here," some of

Bernhard's "most withering commentary is reserved for cheap publicity stunts—specifically, the cottage industry that is celebrity death. She takes off on Elton John's remake of "Candle in the Wind" following the death of Princess Diana, and the benefit album for the late Gianni Versace (with proceeds going to fashion victims around the world, she notes).

Her breakout performance would not come on stage, however, but in film, playing an obsessive fan and cohort of Robert Pupkin (Robert De Niro) in Martin Scorsese's

1982 film, "The King of Comedy." The role seemed written specifically for her, tapping as it did into her ability to turn celebrity stalking into performance art. In the end, Bernhard nearly stole the film with a scene in which she tortures a bound and gagged Jerry Lewis. "It was way ahead of its time," Bernhard says of the film.

"Many people have done films about that subject since then. People didn't understand it. They didn't understand obsession (with) celebrity. It predated that whole phenomenon."

Four ways to look at Van Gogh

By Paul Richard

WASHINGTON—He was prolific and protean: a scholar and a sufferer, an art-world pro and a destitute outsider, an evangelical bohemian, both sordid and sublime. There are as many ways to see his pictures as there are ways to read his life. Some are stolid brown and gray. Others seem to detonate in a shrapnel burst of color, as if his world had begun to fly apart. Some are piercingly original. Others closely imitate other artists' work.

Apparent in these paintings—from "Van Gogh's Van Goghs: Masterpieces from the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam"—are the combustible components that he mixed in his art, states the *LA Times-Washington Post News Service*.

1. The Painter of Peasant Life

Van Gogh painted among peasants,

and in some part of his being he was one himself, as burdened and as earthy as a rustic out of Brueghel, as soiled and as coarse.

His studio in Nuenen, Netherlands, was between the sewer and the dung heap. His shoes were broken, dirty things, and his mattress was straw. His poverty, his politics, his faith and his aesthetics bound him to the lowly. Van Gogh had preached the Gospel to peat-diggers and weavers, and had knelt in their mud huts, but his manners were not saintly. He smelled of wine and cheap tobacco. He got belligerent when drunk. He was really rather scary.

Van Gogh couldn't help but notice that his parents shrank away from him as if he were a "foul beast." His father and his neighbors thought him ready for the madhouse. His underclothes were ruins. When proper ladies spurned him, he turned to two-franc whores.

"One must paint the peasants as if one were one of them," he wrote. The colors of his early works are those of the earth.

2. The Collecting Connoisseur

Van Gogh was a sophisticate. He was multilingual, widely traveled, well connected and well read. He'd studied Greek and Latin, and wrote powerfully and fluently in English, French and Dutch. His ties to the art market could scarcely have been stronger. Three of van Gogh's uncles were dealers by profession, as was his brother Theo, and for nearly seven years he had been employed in the picture trade himself in Paris and in London, in Brussels, Belgium, and The Hague, Netherlands.

Van Gogh was a collector. First, he purchased British prints. "I now have a good thousand sheets of English (wood engravings)," he wrote in 1882. Then,

with Theo, he bought graphics from Japan. In 1887, he arranged a public art show—not of his own paintings, but of flatly patterned, boldly colored Ukiyoe woodblock prints.

His vast originality obscures his many borrowings. He copied the Japanese. "The Courtesan" (1887) imitates a Keisai Eisen print he'd discovered on the cover of a Paris magazine. "Still Life With Carafe and Lemons" (1887) is reminiscent of Cézanne. Van Gogh also copied Rembrandt, and, in 1889, Delacroix's "Pia."

He borrowed to the end. "Daubigny's Garden" (1890), a landscape he completed the month before he killed himself, bows in two directions—toward Daubigny's own landscapes and toward Claude Monet's.

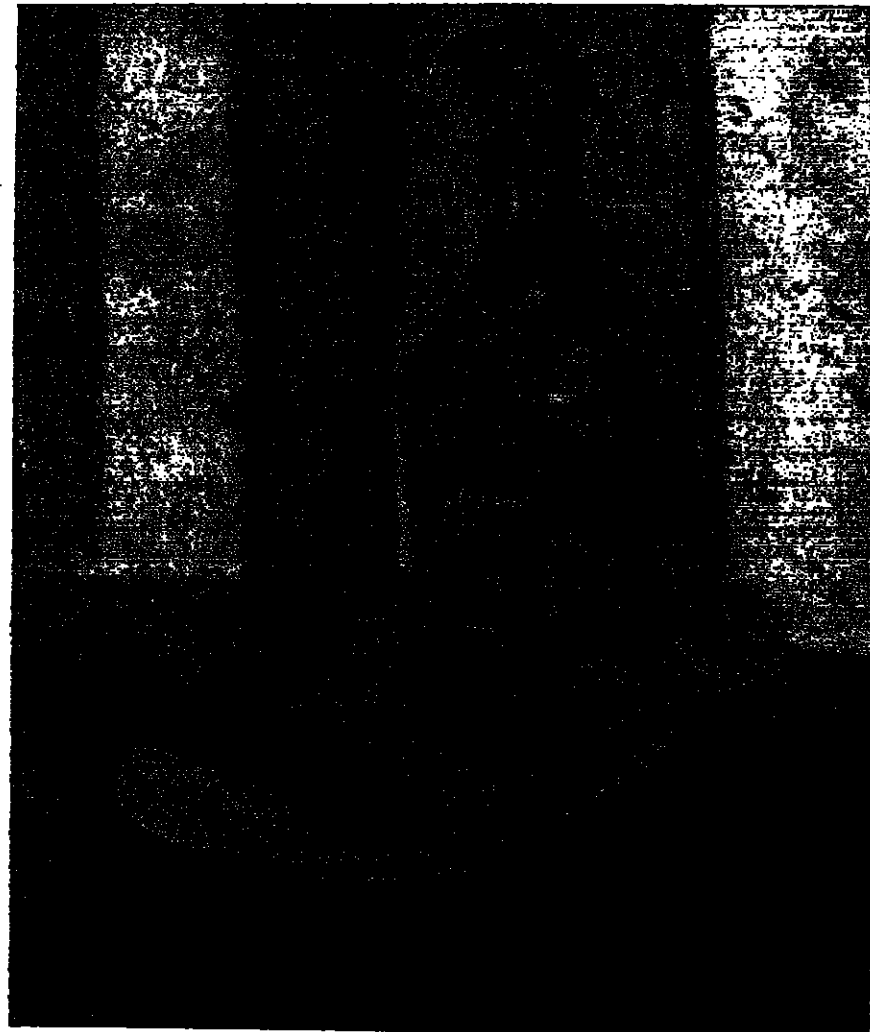
3. The Palette Explodes

When van Gogh moved to Paris, in March 1886, he seemed to have caught fire. He was suddenly a colorist. The incandescent canvases on which his reputation rests followed his conversion. He painted them all in the last four years of his life.

Before, he'd kept to middle tones, seeking "the gray harmony." Now, he turned to flaming reds, blues, oranges and yellows. Before, he'd practiced shading. Now, he saw it was "impossible" to deal at the same time with saturated hues and subtle tonal values. "One has to choose," he wrote, and what he chose was color.

He used little bits of colored yarn to help compose his color chords. He no longer mixed his hues when he put them on his palette. Henceforth, he built his images of rhythmic, rhyming paint strokes, markings that his brush put down one color at a time.

"I shall be an obstinate colorist," he wrote. "The color laws," he said, "are unutterably beautiful." In "Self-Portrait With Felt Hat" (1887-1888), a force field of color reverberates around his head like a ringing halo. "I shall exaggerate the fairness of the hair," he wrote, "arrive at tones of orange, chrome, pale yellow. Behind the head—instead of painting the ordinary wall of the shabby apart-



Vincent van Gogh's "Still Life With Carafe and Lemons," painted in 1887, is reminiscent of Paul Cézanne's work; van Gogh also copied Rembrandt and Delacroix.

ment, I shall paint infinity." "The painter of the future," he wrote in 1888, "will be a colorist the like of which has never yet been seen."

4. The Shadow

Van Gogh pulled the trigger among yellow fields of wheat on July 27, 1890. He died two days later in his brother's arms.

"Vast fields of wheat under troubled skies" glow in his last paintings. His drawing and his coloring (with van Gogh, the two are one) were still as strong as ever, and his long-neglected work at last was gaining notice, when he seized these final images. Their yellows shine like heated gold. Beyond the warming sunlight, the chilling dark descends.

He long had known that shadow. His letters had for years voiced his intense suffering, his "overwhelming boredom," his loneliness and loathing. He wrote: "It is only when I stand painting before my easel that I feel in any way alive."

His episodes of madness had been

growing more acute. When seized by his attacks he had put a razor to his ear lobe, or swallowed clods of dirt, or turpentine and paints. Just days before his suicide he felt his life attacked, he wrote, "at its very root."

In "Wheat Field With a Reaper" (1889), Van Gogh had pictured death "on the point of snuffing." "I see in this reaper—a vague figure, totting away for all he's worth in the midst of the heat to finish his task—I see in him the image of death: in the sense that humanity might be the wheat that he is reaping," he wrote in September 1889.

"But there is no sadness in this death: this one takes place in broad daylight with a sun flooding everything with a light of pure gold. It's all yellow, except for a line of purple hills. A pale and golden yellow."

I find it odd that I saw it like that through the iron bars of a cell. In the end, Van Gogh welcomed dying. The bleak and jagged birds in "Wheat Field With Crows," his final painting, predict what soon would come.